THE PROM

SCREENPLAY BY
BOB MARTIN & CHAD BEGUELIN

BASED ON THE BROADWAY MUSICAL BY CHAD BEGUELIN, BOB MARTIN AND MATTHEW SKLAR

BLACKNESS. THE OVERTURE BEGINS. SUDDENLY --

EXT. BROADWAY -- BALMY SPRING NIGHT

We TILT down from a blazing MARQUEE that reads "ELEANOR! The ELEANOR ROOSEVELT MUSICAL!" to a purple carpet. A peppy REPORTER with a microphone holds court with actors dressed in gowns and tuxedos.

FRANK DILELLA
It's Frank DiLella with NY1's On Stage and we're here for the opening night of "Eleanor! -- The Eleanor Roosevelt Musical," starring the incomparable Dee Dee Allen.

DEE DEE ALLEN turns from another interview. She is glamorous and a true legend who gave EVERYTHING she has to The Great White Way.

FRANK DILELLA (CONT'D)
Dee Dee, you're a Broadway star.

DEE DEE
Yes, I am.

FRANK DILELLA
You have your choice of roles, what drew you to Eleanor?

DEE DEE
Eleanor Roosevelt was a powerful, brave, charismatic woman that no one had ever heard of. Her story needs to be told. People need to know it's possible to change the world, whether you are a homely middle-aged first lady, or a Broadway star.

Dee Dee nods, moves down the line for more press. BARRY GLICKMAN enters the line talking to another hack.

RED CARPET REPORTER
And here's Barry Glickman! You were brilliant as FDR.

BARRY
I know. The moment I first stepped into FDR's shoes, and by shoes I mean wheelchair, I had an epiphany.
(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)
I realized there is no difference between the President of the United States and a celebrity. We both have power. The power to change the world.

DEE DEE
(to another reporter)
It's a weighty responsibility.

BARRY
Let's talk process.

Barry begins to sing and dance down the red carpet, singing into microphones, mugging for photos, sure of a Tony.

BARRY (CONT'D)
"WHEN I'M IN CHARACTER I GO INSANE, I STAGGER, I STAMMER, I SOB, I MAKE THE AUDIENCES FEEL MY PAIN AND IF THEY DON'T LEAVE DEPRESSED, THEN I'VE NOT DONE MY JOB..."

He passes Dee Dee, singing now to a reporter

DEE DEE
"EACH TIME I FIND A ROLE LIKE ELEANOR, THE ARTIST INSIDE OF ME THRIVES! I PUT ON THAT WIG AND THOSE PROSTHETIC TEETH, AND KNOW I'M CHANGING LIVES!"

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE -- NIGHT

A rapt CROWD watches as Dee Dee (in Eleanor teeth and outfit) overacts her heart out.

DEE DEE
"BY THE TIME I GET TUBERCULOSIS, IN ACT TWO..."

She coughs. Barry wheels by full of exuberance.

BARRY
"EVEN THE PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAD INSIDE..."

DEE DEE & BARRY
"WILL SHOUT 'BRAVO!" ON CUE!"

AUDIENCE
(leaping to their feet)
"Bravo!"

INT. BROADWAY GREEN ROOM -- NIGHT

Dee Dee has changed post show into a glittering jumpsuit and looks amazing. Well wishers abound. Barry enters as PRESS AGENT SHELDON stands on a chair.

SHELDON
(reading phone)
The first review is in. The New Jersey Star Ledger.

There's a pause while everyone reads their phones.

DEE DEE
Don't tell me! Unless it's a rave. Or if it's mixed-positive.

BARRY
It says we're a hit!

EXT. BROADWAY -- NIGHT

Dee Dee and Barry dance cross the street to Sardi's as others follow. The music vamps as they enter and --

INT. SARDI'S -- NIGHT

Barry turns to the adoring crowd, standing on a table.

BARRY
"WE'RE A HIT, AND I THINK WE DESERVE IT..."

DEE DEE
(also on a table)
"THAT'S FOR SURE..."

BARRY
"ALSO IT MEANS THAT THIS TOUR DE FORCE, WILL NOT BE FORCED TO TOUR."

Dee Dee turns to the "ELEANOR!" marquee blinking across the street and perfectly framed through the second floor window.

DEE DEE
(raising a glass)
To Eleanor! May she run for eternity!

ALL
To Eleanor!

DANCING WAITERS apparently plucked from a revival of "Hello, Dolly!" appear, lifting and moving Dee Dee and Barry.

ALL (CONT'D)
"CHEERS TO A SHOW THAT'S SO INSPIRING, IT'S ALMOST TOO MUCH TO SIT THROUGH, AND IF WE RUN THAT MIGHT MEAN ONE MORE THING..."

BARRY
"THAT IN TEN YEARS OR SO, WE'LL DO ELEANOR TWO!"

DEE DEE
"I CAN PREDICT WHAT THE REVIEWS WILL SAY, BEFORE THE NEXT NOTICE ARRIVES, IT'S GROUNDBREAKING..."

ALL
"EARTH-SHAKING..."

BARRY
"LIFE-AFFIRMING..."

ALL
"BREATHTAKING..."

DEE DEE & BARRY
"GUT-WRENCHING..."

ALL
"HEART-ACHING..."

DEE DEE & BARRY
"IN TWO WORDS IT'S..."

ALL
"HIST'RY MAKING!"

DEE DEE & BARRY
"THAT'S WHY EVERY ACTOR STRIVES... FOR ADULATION, AND COMPENSATION, THAT COMES FROM NIGHTLY CHANGING LIVES!"

BARRY
It's just what we do!

The opening number ENDS. Phones begin dinging. People start staring at their phones.

SHELDON
The rest of the reviews are coming in. The Post, Associated Press, The New York Times.

BARRY
The New York Times!

The whole room reads in silence.

SHELDON
Wow.

Party goers drift away, still reading the devastating review.

DEE DEE
What's happening?

SHELDON
Wow. This is not the review you want when you've got shitty advance sales. This is going to close us.

DEE DEE
Close us? We just opened!

BARRY
What didn't they like? Was it the hip hop?

SHELDON
Yes, but not only that.

BARRY
Sheldon, for God's sake, just read it.

SHELDON
Okay. Just the highlights: "Barry Glickman's FDR might just be the most insultingly misguided, offensive, and laughable performance that this reviewer has ever had the squirming misfortune to endure."

DEE DEE
That's not so bad.

BARRY
Do her! Do her!

SHELDON
"Watching Dee Dee Allen's Eleanor Roosevelt croaking out a heavy-handed message of activism is like paying an aging drag queen to shove a syrup-soaked American flag down my throat."

DEE DEE
That is not criticism; it's a personal attack!

SHELDON
"If you are considering buying a ticket to this show, do yourself a favor; buy a few feet of good heavy rope instead and then go hang yourself."

BARRY
Jesus. Was the show really that bad?

SHELDON
It's not the show. It's you two. You're not likable.

BARRY & DEE DEE
What?

SHELDON
We've been over this a million times: nobody likes a narcissist. Leave it to me. I'll go try to change the narrative, once again.

BARRY
So talking about yourself non-stop suddenly makes you a narcissist? I hate this world.

Sheldon exits.

DEE DEE
This is terrible. It hurts. It hurts my heart. Wait, where did everybody go?

A waiter, TRENT OLIVER approaches Dee Dee.

TRENT
My condolences, Dee Dee. Remember; you have friends.

DEE DEE
Thank you. Who are you?

TRENT
A friend. Trent Oliver. We did five shows together.

Dee Dee looks to Barry for help.

BARRY
Trent. Went to Juilliard? Won't shut up about it?

DEE DEE
Oh Trent! Why are you dressed like a waiter?

TRENT
I'm between gigs. I feel adrift, as I did in the days before Juilliard. You see, my passions are fueled by the power of Lady Theatre and how she can, with her gentle touch, sculpt the human soul. But at Juilliard --

BARRY
Mother of God.

TRENT
-- they taught me an actor is still an actor even when fishing an earring out of a chocolate fountain. If I might soliloquize for a moment...

BARRY
I'm aging. He's aging me.

TRENT
If you prick me, do I not bleed? If you do not pay me, do I not still act? Still, I've played Hamlet! And yet I am known only as "that guy" on the beloved 90s sitcom "Talk to the Hand."

INT. TITLE SEQUENCE -- TALK TO THE HAND -- DAY

Trent turns to us, smiles and looks into camera as a title announces "And Trent Oliver as Uncle Mark." He then gives the "talk to the hand" gesture and laughs uproariously. It's awful.

INT. SARDI'S -- NIGHT

TRENT
I question the very meaning of my existence. Is a life on the stage really any life at all?

ANGIE, a LEGGY CHORINE approaches with drinks.

ANGIE
Hey guys.

Dee Dee and Barry welcome the interruption.

DEE DEE & BARRY
Angie!

ANGIE
Sorry your show closed on opening night. Again.

DEE DEE
Thanks.

ANGIE
Welcome to the world of the unemployed.

BARRY
I thought you were in "Chicago."

ANGIE
I just quit. Twenty years in the chorus and they still wouldn't let me play Roxie Hart. You know who they have playing the role these days?

BARRY
Who?

ANGIE
Tina Louise. You know, Ginger from "Gilligan's Island"?

BARRY
My God. Is she still alive?

ANGIE
Not really, no.

EXT. EDGEWATER, INDIANA -- HIGH SCHOOL -- NIGHT

Parents and others enter for a PTA gathering.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYMNASIUM -- NIGHT

MRS. GREENE bangs the gavel announcing the start of the vote.

MRS. GREENE
Let's just get to it. All in favor?

Everyone raises their hands.

MRS. GREENE (CONT'D)
All against?

Not a single hand.

MRS. GREENE (CONT'D)
The motion is passed.

She hits the gavel again, she likes the gavel.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

STEADICAM: Mrs. Greene is followed by a couple of reporters as she walks to her car.

MRS. GREENE
Look, the PTA has an accepted set of rules concerning the prom: young ladies must wear non-revealing dresses, young men must wear suits or tuxes, and if a student chooses to bring a date, that person must be of the opposite sex.

INDIANA REPORTER
Can't you just ban this student?

MRS. GREENE
We have been advised that there may be some legal repercussions if we prevented this girl from attending. So although it breaks my heart, we have no choice: there won't be a prom this year. Thank you.

RACK FOCUS. The girl causing all this controversy -- sweet kind EMMA -- watches leaning against a wall. MR. HAWKINS the sympathetic principal looks on. We CUT BACK TO:

INT. SARDI'S -- NIGHT (LATER)

The foursome have closed the place down. Several martini glasses are in front of Dee Dee and Barry; Angie has downed at least twenty glasses of rose. They ruminate.

DEE DEE
We're wasting our lives.

ANGIE
It's true. Oh, well. At least we're all in the same boat.

TRENT
"Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows."
(a beat)
It's from "The Tempest."

BARRY
Okay. One: shut up. Two: No! I refuse to give up. We're still celebrities. We have power.

TRENT
But The Times has castrated you as it were.

ANGIE
He wrote you off as "aging narcissists."

BARRY
Well, we have to show the world that we're not that.

DEE DEE
What, aging?

BARRY
No, narcissists! People who are in love with themselves.

DEE DEE
I still don't understand what's wrong with that.

BARRY
Wait a minute. I know how we can still love ourselves, but appear to be decent human beings. We'll become celebrity activists!

ANGIE
Brilliant!

TRENT
That avoids The Times completely!

BARRY
All we need is a cause.

DEE DEE
A cause celebre!

BARRY
Exactly. Everybody think of some causes.

TRENT
Um...poverty?

BARRY
Too big.

ANGIE
World hunger?

BARRY
Again. That's a major thing. I'm talking about something we can handle. What's the biggest problem in America right now? Go.

ANGIE
Well, I think it's the electoral college. It needs to be abolished.

DEE DEE
As an exercise, just assume we don't know what it is and explain it to us.

ANGIE
Well, the electoral college was created to allow the smaller states to have power in a Federalist government. If the amount of electoral college votes a state's received was --

BARRY
Oh my God. So bored!

DEE DEE
This is hard.

TRENT
Let's think of something less daunting.

DEE DEE
Yes. A little injustice that we can drive to.

ANGIE
(taking out her phone)
Let me see what's trending.
(flipping through twitter)
(MORE)

ANGIE (CONT'D)
Trump. Trump. Trump. Kanye. Kanye. Trump. Hey. What about this girl?

BARRY
What girl?

ANGLE, DOWN ON PHONE: A new story about Emma.

ANGIE
It's all over Twitter. She lives in a small town called Edgewater, Indiana. She's a lesbian and she wanted to take her girlfriend to the high school prom and the PTA went apeshit.

BARRY
They cancelled Prom? How could they do that?

ON THE PHONE: Mr. Hawkins stands with Emma and addresses the press corp. It's LIVE on Twitter. WE INTERCUT:

HAWKINS
The first thing I'm going to do is contact the Indiana State's Attorney. This isn't about school rules; this is a civil rights case.

EMMA
What? Seriously?

HAWKINS
I'm betting pressure from the State's Attorney will stop these bigots cold. It better, because I'll tell you this much: if word gets out, people are gonna get mad.

BARRY
This pisses me off!

HAWKINS
Next thing you know, some modern day Eleanor Roosevelt is going to march down here and all hell is going to break loose.

Dee Dee's ears suddenly go back with urgency.

DEE DEE
We have got to go down there and raise holy hell!

BARRY
We are going to be the biggest thing to happen in Indiana since... whatever's happened in Indiana!

TRENT
So this is it? This is our cause?

BARRY
Yes! It checks all the boxes, and as a bonus it's gay, which is something I can relate to! Are you all with me?

TRENT, ANGIE & DEE DEE
Yes!

DEE DEE
We'll have a rally. We'll carry picket signs!

ANGIE
And make T-shirts!

BARRY
I'll get Sheldon to tag along. He can find us a venue.

ANGIE
Wow. Can we really do this?

BARRY
You bet your sweet MILF ass we can.
(then)
"WE'RE GONNA PROVE THAT IN THIS DAY AND AGE, BEING GAY ISN'T A CRIME, THIS IS OUR MOMENT TO CHANGE THE WORLD, ONE LESBIAN..."

TRENT
"LESBIAN..."

DEE DEE
"LESBIAN..."

ANGIE
"LESBIAN..."

ALL
"AT A TIME!"

BARRY
"WE'RE GONNA HELP THAT LITTLE LESBIAN, WHETHER SHE LIKES IT OR NOT, WHEN YOU'RE A LEGENDARY THESPIAN..."

DEE DEE
"FIRST YOU HELP THE DISTRESSED..."

TRENT
"THEN YOU HELP THE DISTRAUGHT..."

BARRY
"WE'RE GOING DOWN TO WHERE THE NECKS ARE RED, AND LACK OF DENTISTRY THRIVES, WHY SING AND DANCE WHEN YOU CAN TAKE A STANCE..."

BARRY, DEE DEE, TRENT
"AND KNOW YOU'RE TRULY CHANGING LIVES..."

DEE DEE
Oh! We'll need an anthem.

ANGIE
Like "We Are The World."

BARRY
Yeah. But about being an angry lesbian.

TRENT
Stephen Sondheim will write something for us. He's a huge fan of my Sweeney Todd. Leave it to me.

ANGIE
Wait! How will we get there?

TRENT
I just booked a non-equity tour of "Godspell" that goes through Indiana. You can join us on the bus.

BARRY
You see? It's all coming together!

EXT. BROADWAY -- NIGHT

The foursome link arms and march down the wet, blazing avenue.

ALL
"WE'RE GONNA MARCH UNTIL THAT TOWN LOOKS LIKE, THE END OF ACT ONE OF "LES MIZ," YOU DON'T GOTTA HAVE A PHD IN PSYCH, TO KNOW THAT PEOPLE KOWTOW TO US FOLKS IN THE BIZ..."

BARRY
"WE'RE GONNA TEACH THEM TO BE MORE P.C. THE MINUTE OUR GROUP ARRIVES..."

ALL (EXCEPT BARRY)
"THAT'S RIGHT..."

BARRY
"THOSE FIST PUMPING..."

DEE DEE
"BIBLE THUMPING..."

TRENT
"SPAM EATING..."

ANGIE
"COUSIN HUMPING..."

BARRY
"COW TIPPING..."

DEE DEE
"SHOULDER SLUMPING..."

TRENT
"TEA BAGGING..."

ANGIE
"JESUS JUMPING..."

ALL
"LOSERS AND THEIR INBRED WIVES, THEY'LL LEARN COMPASSION..."

DEE DEE
"AND BETTER FASHION..."

ALL
"ONCE WE AT LAST START CHANGING LIVES!"

BARRY
Now let's go help that dyke!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY

A bell rings. The students of James Madison High pour into the halls on the way to their lockers and to their next class. Emma emerges from the crowd. STUDENTS purposely bump into her as they pass her. Emma makes it to her locker. She opens it. A pink teddy bear swings out of it. "LEZBO" is written inside.

EMMA
Nice.
(to the students)
This would be a death threat, I guess. Way to take the high road, guys.

Two girls, KAYLEE and SHELBY, walk up behind her. ALYSSA, an intelligent looking girl, lingers behind them.

KAYLEE
Do you like the bear?

EMMA
Yeah. You know, I'm pretty sure this breaks a few laws. Violating my privacy, threatening my life...

KAYLEE
It's our way of saying "thank you, Emma."

SHELBY
Thank you so much for cancelling Prom.

EMMA
I didn't cancel Prom, your parents did!

ALYSSA
Come on, guys. Lay off her.

KAYLEE
Oh, are you on her side?

ALYSSA
No. I'm just not in third grade. Let's go.

SHELBY
Unlike your social life, this is not over.

They go. Alyssa gives Emma an apologetic look as she goes. As Emma walks and sings --

EMMA
"NOTE TO SELF, DON'T BE GAY IN INDIANA, BIG HEADS-UP, THAT'S A REALLY STUPID PLAN. THERE ARE PLACES WHERE IT'S IN TO BE OUT, MAYBE SAN FRANCISCO OR THEREABOUT, BUT IN INDIANA WITHOUT A DOUBT, IF YOU'RE NOT STRAIGHT THEN GUESS WHAT'S BOUND TO HIT THE FAN?"

INT. HIGH SCHOOL INDOOR POOL -- DAY

Emma dives with FOUR OTHER GIRLS. We follow her UNDERWATER. As she surfaces and gasps for oxygen --

EMMA
"JUST BREATHE, EMMA, NOT EVERYONE IS THAT REPRESSED, JUST BREATHE, EMMA, IT WOULDN'T BE HIGH SCHOOL WITHOUT A TEST, JUST CLOSE YOUR EYES AND COUNT TO TEN, GO TO YOUR HAPPY PLACE AND THEN TRY NOT TO COMBUST, JUST BREATHE..."

NICK & KEVIN in Speedos accost her as she exits the pool, shivering and wrapping a towel around herself.

NICK
Hey, Emma, who is this girl you were going to bring to Prom anyway? I didn't know we had more than one lesbo in town.

EMMA
You don't know her. She's new here.

KEVIN
Like an exchange student?

EMMA
Maybe.

NICK
Well, then, why don't you, like, exchange her for a guy?

KEVIN
Dude. Nice!

Nick and Kevin exit. She pulls off her swim cap, furious.

EMMA
"NOTE TO SELF, PEOPLE SUCK IN INDIANA, LEAVE TODAY, PRAY THE GREYHOUND ISN'T FULL."

INT. GYM -- DAY

Emma navigates a game of dodgeball. MEAN GIRLS abound including Shelby and Kaylee. SLOW MOTION of their MEAN TWISTED faces as they aim at Emma.

EMMA
"WHO KNEW ASKING OUT A GIRL TO THE PROM, WOULD GO OVER JUST LIKE AN ATOM BOMB, AND MAKE THINGS MUCH WORSE WITH YOUR DAD AND MOM, AND WHO'D HAVE EVER THOUGHT THAT COULD BE POSSIBLE? JUST BREATHE, EMMA, PICTURE A BEACH WITH GOLDEN SAND, JUST BREATHE, EMMA, PICTURE A XANAX IN YOUR HAND..."

Emma grabs a ball, done with the bullying, and THROWS IT right at Shelby's face. Off Shelby's surprise --

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY -- DAY

Emma heads for another class.

EMMA
"TRY JOURNALING OR START A BLOG, JUST END THIS INNER MONOLOGUE, SEETHE IF YOU MUST, BUT JUST BREATHE..."

Emma heads into class. Hawkins appears, interrupting her.

HAWKINS
Okay. I just got off the phone with the State's Attorney. Like I suspected, she thinks this is a civil rights issue. This is a big deal, Emma.

EMMA
So what are you saying: I'm a gay, white Rosa Parks?

HAWKINS
No. I am absolutely not saying that. I'm just saying that I'm excited to be involved with something like this. And I'm really glad you're not on Meth.

EMMA
What?

HAWKINS
I got a friend who's a principal in Chattanooga, all he deals with is Meth. Meth all day long.

EMMA
Well, I'm not on Meth. Not yet. We'll see how the PTA meeting goes.

HAWKINS
It's not going to be fun. We'll get through it. Take a sec. Relax. Come in when you're ready.

Hawkins exits.

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Emma enters a classroom, where the kids are being unruly. She sits and looks out the window wistfully.

EMMA
"JUST BREATHE, EMMA, REMEMBER THAT THING CALLED OXYGEN, JUST BREATHE, EMMA, LOOK AT THE CRAZY STATE YOU'RE IN...JUST SMILE AND NOD, ALTHOUGH THEY'RE JERKS, SAY NAMASTE AND PRAY IT WORKS, AND LIKE WE'VE DISCUSSED, JUST BREATHE."

INT. BUS -- DAY

A rented bus makes its way to Indiana. It's a loud, unpleasant ride. Trent sits with a bag in his lap, looking green. The Godspell kids are busy making picket signs. They sing while they work; an awkwardly harmonized version of Day By Day. Barry sits with Angie, who is struggling to make a phone call, and Dee Dee who is shifting uncomfortably in her seat. Barry is trying to block out the music.

BARRY
Okay enough! Stop singing! I'm sorry, but you're making me hate god! And those signs are pathetic. We're not teamsters, we're the gay cavalry! Put some glitter on them, for Christ's sake!

Angie, who has finished her phone call, turns to Barry.

ANGIE
You're scaring them.

BARRY
Well they're scaring me.

ANGIE
(to the kids)
Just sing something else. Less gratingly. Thanks.

Barry slumps back into his seat. The Godspell kids rehearse the harmonies in Save the People, more softly this time.

ANGIE (CONT'D)
The hotel is booked. Breakfast isn't included, but there's something called a "Waffle Shed" across the street.

BARRY
Sounds delicious.

Dee Dee pulls out a mink blanket, snuggles into it. She gives him a look. He notices.

BARRY (CONT'D)
I don't like school buses. Bad associations.

DEE DEE
Cheer up. We are doing something great here. We are being great people. This is all great. This is going to get me my third Tony Award...
(off his raised eyebrow)
You know how the Tonys work: it's all politics. They don't vote for you, they vote for your *brand*. My brand is tarnished, as you know --

BARRY
Because of the infamous tirade at the Longacre Theater.

DEE DEE
When a cell phone goes off in the middle of a performance I can't be held responsible --

BARRY
It was *your* cell phone.

DEE DEE
I didn't know it at the time! Anyway, all the good will we will get from this thing will wash me clean. I'll win no matter what my next project is.

BARRY
You're just greedy. I would be happy with one Tony. I thought I had a shot with FDR. I need something to go right for once. The show is dead, my love life's deader...

DEE DEE
What happened to Andre?

BARRY
Andy. Much like the show he's performing in, his heart is Frozen. I caught him making out with the guy who sells t-shirts in the St. James lobby. The goddamn t-shirt guy!

DEE DEE
That's disgusting.

BARRY
I know!

DEE DEE
I mean Trent. He's puking again. Sorry, you were saying?

BARRY
I need a win. I'm so sick of all of the rejection. I'm no Dee Dee Allen. They don't write Tony worthy roles for chubby, short guys. You know how not fun it is to be surrounded by chorus boys with 0 percent body fat and abs that could grate cheese? They eat what they want, screw like rabbits. I hate them.

DEE DEE
A lot of bile.

BARRY
Well, I'm angry at life.

DEE DEE
No, Trent again. He's retching... Sorry, go on.

BARRY
I went into this business because I loved it, yes, but also to prove to everyone who doubted me -- my teachers, the kids on the school bus, my horrible parents -- that I could do something important.

DEE DEE
That's exactly what we're doing: something important.

BARRY
Yes. I just hope we don't screw it up.

Dee Dee considers this. They both sigh. The Godspell kids dive into Day By Day with gusto as Barry dies a little.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

We are in a raucous PTA meeting.

MRS. GREENE
You're telling us that the State's Attorney is forcing us to hold a prom?

HAWKINS
The State's Attorney wants us to hold an inclusive prom, yes, because that's what they feel best reflects America's values.

MRS. GREENE
This is not America. This is Indiana.

HAWKINS
Just to be clear, this is America.

PARENT #1
My son will not be forced to go to a homosexual prom.

HAWKINS
Again, it's not a homosexual prom; it's an inclusive prom and you don't have to attend if you don't want to.

(MORE)

HAWKINS (CONT'D)
Look I'm sorry you're upset, but the organization of the prom is within the purview of the Student Council. Let's hear what they have to say. Alyssa?

ALYSSA
Well, we want Prom to go on, obviously. It's supposed to be a celebration, for all students --

MRS. GREENE
This is not a student matter. This is about government tearing our community apart. This is big government taking away our freedom of choice.

HAWKINS
Okay. This is not about government intervention. Emma? What is this about?

EMMA
I just want to go to Prom like any other kid.

HAWKINS
But you can't. And that's why the courts are involved. Now I know the unfamiliar can be frightening, but the fact is a young girl at this school -- an honor student -- stood up and asked us all to take a closer look at our beliefs. So, let's do that. Ask yourself exactly what is it that you find so frightening about homosexuals?

At that very moment, the doors to the gym burst open and Barry, Trent, Angie & Sheldon and the Godspell Group rush in, picket signs in hand.

BARRY
Hold it! Hold it! Hold it! What you are doing is wrong!

Everyone is shocked.

MRS. GREENE
Excuse me...who are you?

BARRY
(to Mrs. Greene)
Seriously? I'm Broadway's Barry Glickman! Where's the lesbian kid?
(Emma raises her hand)
Hi, I'm Barry. What's your name?

EMMA
Emma.

Barry hugs her.

BARRY
Emma! Don't you worry, Emma. You're not alone! I'm as gay as a bucket of wigs --
(the crowd gasps)
A bucket of them! And I have come all the way from New York City to save you! Tomorrow we're going to have a rally! There's going to be banners! Choreography --

HAWKINS
Excuse me --

BARRY
Shame! Shame on you!
(pointing to the parents)
Shame!

BARRY, ANGIE & TRENT
Shame! Shame! Shame! Etc.

MRS. GREENE
What is going on? Who are you people?

TRENT
We're liberals from Broadway.

ANGIE
And we've come to pry open your tiny little minds! You see, the five of us...
(notices Dee Dee is missing)
Wait, where the hell is Dee Dee?

Dee Dee makes a dramatic entrance and strides across the stage, stopping at the podium.

HAWKINS
(recognizing Dee Dee)
Oh my God! You're Dee Dee Allen.

DEE DEE
You bet your ass I am.

HAWKINS
What...What are you doing here?

DEE DEE
I am changing the world.
(shooing him away)
Excuse me.
(then)
"I WANT TO TELL THE PEOPLE OF WHATEVER THIS TOWN'S CALLED, I KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE AND FRANKLY I'M APPALLED..."

"I READ THREE-QUARTERS OF A NEWS STORY, AND KNEW I HAD TO COME, UNLESS I'M DOING "THE MIRACLE WORKER," I WON'T PLAY BLIND, DEAF AND DUMB!"

"LISTEN YOU BIGOTED MONSTERS, JUST WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? YOUR PREJUDICE AND YOUR OPPRESSION WON'T GET PAST THIS BROADWAY STAR. STEALING THE RIGHTS OF A GIRL WHO IS AN L.G.B.Q. TEEN, I'VE BEEN FAR TOO ANGRY TO GOOGLE WHAT THOSE LETTERS MEAN. BUT IT'S NOT ABOUT ME, IT'S ABOUT POOR..."

BARRY, TRENT, SHELDON & ANGIE
"Emma..."

DEE DEE
"FOR CAN'T YOU SEE, THE RAW DEAL SHE'S BEEN DEALT? SO HEAR MY PLEA, OR HERE'S YOUR NEXT DILEMMA, HOW DO YOU SILENCE A WOMAN WHO'S KNOWN FOR HER BELT?"

BARRY
Sing it, Eleanor!

DEE DEE
"HER BELT! BUT IT'S NOT ABOUT ME..."

MRS. GREENE
Get them out of here! Now!

DEE DEE
"GO ON AND THREATEN TO RIOT, IT WON'T FAZE ME IN THE LEAST, I UNDERSTAND FURIOUS TOWNFOLK, I DID "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST. I'M NO STRANGER TO SLANDER SO, MY DEAR, YOU'RE NOT ALONE, THE POST ONCE SAID I WAS TOO OLD TO PLAY EVA PERON, EVA PERON! BUT IT'S NOT ABOUT ME, IT'S EMMA'S STORY, DAMN IT! EQUALITY SHOULD BE THIS COUNTRY'S NORM TO A PICTURE TAKER. NO PHOTOGRAPHY UNLESS YOU INSTAGRAM IT, USE HASHTAG DEE DEE TAKES LOCAL YOKELS BY STORM, BUT IT'S NOT ABOUT ME. I DIDN'T COME HERE TO MAKE A SCENE, BUT I KNOW HOW EMMA'S HEART ACHES, AND THIS IS HOW ACTORS INTERVENE, THROUGH FIERY SONGS AND DANCE BREAKS!"

Dee Dee does a fiery dance break. Barry and Angie join her. Trent plays the cowbell. The crowd watches in horror.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
"BUT IT'S NOT ABOUT ME, ALTHOUGH I'M RICH AND FAMOUS. PUBLICITY IS NOT MY FINAL GOAL..."

STUDENTS & PARENTS
"CALL SECURITY!"

DEE DEE
"YOU NEEDN'T BE SOME BACKWOODS IGNORAMUS, JOIN ME AND WE'LL START FIGHTING. COULD I GET SOFTER LIGHTING? WAIT, THIS..."
(thanking the lighting person)
Thanks!
(Back to singing.)
"IS NOT..."

BARRY, ANGIE, SHELDON & TRENT
"NOT, NOT, NOT..."

DEE DEE
"ABOUT ME..."

BARRY, ANGIE, SHELDON & TRENT
"THIS IS NOT ABOUT..."

ENSEMBLE
"WHAT IS HAPPENING?"

BARRY, ANGIE, SHELDON & TRENT
"THIS IS NOT ABOUT..."

ENSEMBLE
"WHAT IS HAPPENING?"

BARRY, ANGIE & TRENT
"THIS IS NOT ABOUT..."

DEE DEE
"IT'S ALL ABOUT EMMA AND NOT ABOUT ME!"

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

The gym empties out. Mrs. Greene exits yelling at Hawkins.

MRS. GREENE
Who was responsible for that? Was it you?

HAWKINS
Me? No! I have no idea what just happened in there.

MRS. GREENE
Strangers burst in hurling insults at the parents, and you do nothing? What kind of a school are you running here, Mr. Hawkins?

Mrs. Greene leaves. Dee Dee emerges.

HAWKINS
Excuse me. Miss Allen, may I speak to you for a moment? I'm Tom. Tom Hawkins. I'm the principal. I just...uh, what are you doing here?

DEE DEE
We have come to show this community that gay people and gay-positive icons like myself are made of the same flesh and blood as they are. We're not monsters.

BARRY
(emerging, to a parent)
And I'll tell you something else. I'm half Jewish too! The Poppas! The Poppas!

The parent runs off with Barry following.

HAWKINS
Well...this is not the way to do it. I almost had those parents convinced to reinstate Prom and you disrupted everything.

DEE DEE
Well, that's exactly what we came here to do.

Dee Dee starts to leave.

HAWKINS
I'm a fan.

DEE DEE
What? You're a fan?

HAWKINS
Yes. I am.

DEE DEE
What kind of fan? A big fan, or a small fan, or a scary, stabby fan...?

HAWKINS
You could say I'm a big fan, yes.

DEE DEE
Really? That's surprising. You're not my usual demographic.

HAWKINS
You mean black?

DEE DEE
No. Straight. You are straight, right?

HAWKINS
I am. Straight people like Broadway too.

DEE DEE
You know I've heard that, but I always thought it was a fairytale. So to speak.

HAWKINS
Well, it's true. I've been a fan since I saw you in the show for which you won your first Tony.

DEE DEE
You saw "Swallow The Moon"?

HAWKINS
Sure. That song you sing at the top of the second act: "The Lady's Improving"? Chills.

DEE DEE
That song made me a star.

HAWKINS
And it made me a fan.

Trent and Sheldon reappear.

TRENT
Dee Dee, we must make haste.

SHELDON
Some of the larger inbreds are trying to tip over the bus.

Trent and Sheldon leave. Dee Dee starts to follow but --

HAWKINS
Miss Allen. This is a delicate situation. I'm asking you and your friends to back off for a few days.

DEE DEE
Back off? Backing off is exactly what we're not going to do. I see what's happening here. You're trying to disarm me with flattery. Well it won't work, Tom. Flattery only makes me stronger. It fuels my ego.

Dee Dee exits as Emma enters, followed by Angie who is frantically taking pictures with her phone.

EMMA
Stop taking my picture!

ANGIE
We need a poster for the rally.

Angie takes the photo. Leaves.

EMMA
Who are these people?

HAWKINS
Actors. Famous Broadway actors. They've come to help you.

EMMA
Well, they're not helping me! This is a nightmare!

HAWKINS
Oh, it's not a nightmare. You can wake up from a nightmare. I've got to go deal with the riot in the parking lot.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- BLEACHERS -- NIGHT

Alyssa runs up to Emma, here for a forbidden clandestine meeting.

ALYSSA
Oh my God.

EMMA
I know.

ALYSSA
It's like everybody's gone insane. I'm freaking out.

EMMA
Don't freak out. We have a plan, remember? We get dressed up, go to Prom and be together, in public. Not hide anymore.

ALYSSA
I don't know. My mother's going ballistic. I've gotta go. I told her I was just coming back for my books.

EMMA
This is not my fault, you know that, right?
(then)
"I DON'T WANT TO START A RIOT, I DON'T WANT TO BLAZE A TRAIL, I DON'T WANT TO BE A SYMBOL, OR CAUTIONARY TALE...
(MORE)

EMMA (CONT'D)
I DON'T WANT TO BE A SCAPEGOAT, FOR PEOPLE TO OPPOSE, WHAT I WANT IS SIMPLE, AS FAR AS WANTING GOES. I JUST WANNA DANCE WITH YOU, LET THE WHOLE WORLD MELT AWAY, AND DANCE WITH YOU, WHO CARES WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY, AND WHEN WE'RE THROUGH, NO ONE CAN CONVINCE US WE WERE WRONG, ALL IT TAKES IS YOU AND ME, AND A SONG..."

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- FOOTBALL FIELD -- NIGHT

The big STADIUM LIGHTS THUMP ON, revealing the girls walking together down the center line as football players play around them. It's magical and fantastical.

ALYSSA
"I DON'T NEED A BIG PRODUCTION, STREAMERS HANGING IN THE AIR, I DON'T NEED TO SPEND THE NIGHT WITH CONFETTI IN MY HAIR, I DON'T NEED A ROOM OF PEOPLE THAT I DON'T REALLY KNOW..."

EMMA
"I JUST WANT TO HOLD YOU..."

EMMA & ALYSSA
"AND NEVER LET YOU GO..."

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

EMMA & ALYSSA
"I JUST WANNA DANCE WITH YOU, LET THE WHOLE WORLD MELT AWAY, AND DANCE WITH YOU, WHO CARES WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY, AND WHEN WE'RE THROUGH..."

EMMA
"NO ONE CAN CONVINCE US WE WERE WRONG..."

EMMA & ALYSSA
"ALL IT TAKES IS YOU AND ME AND A SONG..."

Mrs. Greene appears.

MRS. GREENE
Alyssa. What are you doing?

ALYSSA
Nothing.

MRS. GREENE
Get in the car. Now!

Alyssa runs off. Mrs. Greene stares at Emma for a moment, then follows Alyssa off. Emma is alone. She sings to herself.

EMMA
"TWO PEOPLE SWAYING SLOWLY, NOTHING MORE AND NOTHING LESS, WHY ANYBODY FEARS THAT, IS ANYBODY'S GUESS..."

"I JUST WANNA DANCE WITH YOU, LET THE WHOLE WORLD MELT AWAY, AND DANCE WITH YOU, WHO CARES WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY, AND WHEN WE'RE THROUGH, NO ONE CAN CONVINCE US WE WERE WRONG, ALL IT TAKES IS YOU AND ME AND A SONG!"

EXT. MOTEL -- NIGHT (ESTABLISHING)

The Godspell bus pulls in.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY -- NIGHT

The lobby of an unpretentious town motel. A CLERK stands behind the counter. The doors burst in and the Broadway contingent arrives: Dee Dee and Angie first.

DEE DEE
Oh my God. This is worse than the bus.

ANGIE
Well, at least it's quieter. If I had to sit through "Day by Day" one more time, I would have killed them all one by one.
(to the clerk)
4 rooms under Dickinson. I called yesterday.

DEE DEE
4 rooms of varying sizes to reflect the hierarchy of the company, correct? Where's my suite?

CLERK
We don't have a suite...

She reaches into her bag, pulls out a Tony award, and smacks it on the counter.

DEE DEE
Do you have a suite now?

CLERK
Uh...no we don't have any suites. All the rooms are the same.

DEE DEE
Surely you know who I am. At the very least I want a room close to the spa.

CLERK
Uh...

Dee Dee reaches into her bag and slams another Tony award onto the counter.

CLERK (CONT'D)
There is no spa. We have a foosball table. I could put you near that...

Barry enters.

BARRY
Angie, have you seen these rooms? We're all going to be murdered and stuffed, you know that right?

ANGIE
Orbitz gave this place three stars.

She takes a small bottle of liquor from her bag, drinks it.

BARRY
Do you have any cabins?

CLERK
Uh, we don't have any cabins...

Barry reaches in his bag and pulls out an award and slaps it on the counter.

BARRY
How about now?

DEE DEE
What is that?

BARRY
Drama Desk. You know what it is!

TRENT
I vomited in the bus again.
(approaching the counter)
May I speak with the hotel doctor?

BARRY
Hotel doctor? Trent, if there's a doctor here he's in the basement sewing the guests together into a giant human centipede.

CLERK
(to Trent)
Oh my God! It's you! I can't believe it's really you!

BARRY
Wait, you know him, but you don't know us?!

TRENT
I suppose my artistry speaks for itself.

CLERK
You're that guy from "Talk to the Hand"! That's on every night at 9 after "Two of a Kind"!

TRENT
I'd like my room now, please.

The clerk hands him his key.

BARRY
Okay. Let's get started! Let's change some minds! Sheldon's working on the venue.
(to Trent)
What about the song? It's not *too* Sondheim-y, is it?

TRENT
About that. Apparently I was misled by my representation. Mr. Sondheim is *not* a huge fan of my Sweeney Todd. Quite the opposite actually. The man has a lot of anger in him. Very clever anger.

DEE DEE
Jesus, Trent. You screwed us! We can't have a rally without an anthem!

TRENT
Don't worry. I wrote something myself. It's quite rousing and is in a very humane key.
(Trent hands out sheet music to everyone)
The Godspell cast will back us up. They have their own costumes.

They all take a moment to read the music in silence. Then --

ANGIE
Oh my God.

BARRY
This is awful.

DEE DEE
You rhymed "bigotry" with "big of me."

TRENT
Pretty great, huh? Take that Lin-Manuel Miranda.

BARRY
We can't do this! They'll throw beer cans at our heads!

TRENT
No, trust me. All we need is a simple message that tugs at the heartstrings and a little pageantry. We have everything we need right here.

ANGIE
Except a venue.

Sheldon enters.

SHELDON
Oh ye of little faith! I got one! I had to get down on my knees a few times, but it was worth it. Good sound system. Good sight lines and a crowd of 2500 guaranteed!

DEE DEE
That's amazing!

TRENT
What is it? One of those beautiful antebellum opera houses?

SHELDON
No, it's an arena! You're the halftime show at something called "a monster truck rally."

As the lights go down we hear the roar of monster trucks.

INT. MONSTER TRUCK RALLY -- DAY

Halftime at the packed monster truck rally. A massive stadium crowd eats jerky and clutch huge cups of soda. STAGE HANDS put finishing touches on a makeshift, very cheap looking stage plopped in the middle of the arena.

MONSTER TRUCK ANNOUNCER
Ladies and Gentlemen! Truckosaurus, the car-eating robot dinosaur, will not be your halftime entertainment today. Instead we have some guests who have come from New York to sing us a song about intolerance.

Trent walks to the center of the stage. The music begins over his intro.

TRENT
Hello, I'm Trent Oliver; actor. And Juilliard graduate.

MAN (OFFSTAGE)
Hey! It's that guy from "Talk to the Hand!"

The crowd roars.

TRENT
You know, "Talk to the Hand" is just a small part of my resume. In the early aughts, I had an arc on "Grey's Anatomy" in which I played Dr. Julio Rodriguez, a handsome Hispanic heart surgeon, whose growing cocaine addiction threatens both his personal and professional life. When preparing for the role, I realized something about people. I realized that even though we are all different on the outside, inside we are all the same. And it occurred to me that if we could just accept our collective sameness, the world would be a much nicer place. That's why I wrote this song.

A giant poster of Emma is revealed. It is the photo that Angie took after the PTA meeting. It is not flattering.

TRENT (CONT'D)
This is for you, Emma. *"FLOWERS ACCEPT THE RAIN AND GROW MORE BEAUTIFUL, BABIES ACCEPT THEIR MOTHER'S BREAST SO THEY CAN GROW STRONG, I ACCEPT THAT I WAS BORN A HANDSOME MAN, SO JOIN WITH ME AND SING THIS ACCEPTANCE SONG..."*

The Godspell cast ENTERS, backing Trent up.

ALL
"LET US ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER..."

TRENT
"I KNOW IT'S TRULY HARD..."

ALL
"WE'RE SISTER AND BROTHER..."

TRENT
"HERE'S WHAT I LEARNED AT JUILLIARD: BIGOTRY'S NOT BIG OF ME, AND IT'S NOT BIG OF YOU..."

ALL
"LET'S ALL WORK TOGETHER, TO MAKE RAINBOW DREAMS COME TRUE..."

TRENT
Ladies and Gentlemen, two time Tony Award Winner, Mrs. Dee Dee Allen.

Dee Dee enters.

DEE DEE
"ACORNS ACCEPT THE SUN AND TURN TO MIGHTY OAKS, SPERM WHALES ACCEPT FRESH SEA AIR THROUGH THEIR BLOWHOLE THINGS..."

TRENT
"BLOWHOLE, BUMBLEBEES ACCEPT THEY'LL DIE WITHIN A YEAR..."

TRENT & DEE DEE
"AND STILL THEY FLAP THEIR SOON-TO-BE-DEAD WINGS..."

ALL
"LET US ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER..."

TRENT
"FORGET YOUR POLITICS..."

ALL
"WE'RE SISTER AND BROTHER..."

TRENT
"SO LET'S NOT BE TOTAL DICKS... BIGOTRY'S NOT BIG OF ME AND IT'S NOT BIG OF YOU..."

ALL
"OOH LET'S ALL WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE RAINBOW DREAMS COME TRUE...!"

TRENT
Ladies and gentlemen, the non-equity cast of Godspell and one time Drama Desk winner, Barry Glickman.

Dance break.

BARRY
"ACCEPT ME! ACCEPT ME! ACCEPT ME! ACCEPT ME! ACCEPT ME! ACCEPT ME! ACCEPT ME! ACCEPT ME! ACCEPT ME!"

ALL
"LET US ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER, JOIN OUR FIGHT TODAY, WE'RE SISTER AND BROTHER..."

TRENT
"MAKE PEOPLE HEAR US WHEN WE SAY:"

They sign the following few verses in silence.

TRENT (CONT'D)
"LET'S ALL WORK TOGETHER..."

ALL
"LET'S MAKE A RAINBOW..."

TRENT
"AND MAKE RAINBOW DREAMS COME TRUE..."

GODSPELL CAST
"ACCEPTANCE, ACCEPTANCE, ACCEPTANCE, ACCEPTANCE..."

Angie appears, dressed as a Goddess of Love. TWO GODSPELL KIDS pull rainbow banners out of her costume.

ALL
"LET'S MAKE RAINBOW DREAMS COME TRUE. Acceptance!"

The song ends. In a moment of great theatrically, HUGE MONSTER TRUCKS race towards twin ramps and then FLY OVER THE HEADS of our performers. Big finish! Crickets from the crowd.

TRENT
So are you with us people?!

We hear the stunned audience start to boo them. A few beer bottles and other debris gets tossed onto the stage. They are shocked and try to duck and quickly retreat.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY -- CONVERSATION PIT AREA -- DAY (LATER)

The Broadway contingent sits, drowning their sorrow in junk food from the help-yourself-bar.

DEE DEE
Trent, I want to rip your face off!

TRENT
I'm sorry --

BARRY
You made me fail and I am so sick of failing!

SHELDON
There's no spinning this. It was a complete disaster.

ANGIE
Now I know what the original cast of "Carrie" felt like.

DEE DEE
No. No you don't.

BARRY
What do we do now?

DEE DEE
We leave. We kill Trent and then leave.

BARRY
But what about the girl?

Hawkins appears with Emma in tow.

HAWKINS
Hi. Emma and I wanted to be the ones to tell you...thanks to pressure from the State's Attorney's office, Prom is back on.

BARRY
We did it!

They all scream with delight.

TRENT
We were the vessel of change because we acted selflessly.

DEE DEE
See? We're not narcissists!

HAWKINS
To be clear, it wasn't because of you...

EMMA
Maybe it was. I mean, everyone started freaking out when you got here. That lawyer might have had the legal power, but you really scared people.

TRENT, ANGIE, SHELDON, BARRY & DEE DEE
Awww.

ANGIE
Don't sell yourself short kid. You're the one who scared people.

HAWKINS
Well, the important thing is, it's a victory. Now you get to go to Prom just like anybody else!

EMMA
Oh my God, it's like four days away.

BARRY
What are you going to wear?

EMMA
Well, I thought I'd wear a vintage tux and some high tops. Does it matter?

BARRY
Does it...
(can't get the word out)
Mmmm-mmm
(recovers)
Look, sweetheart, you don't know me and I don't know you. But I'm begging here; let me dress you for Prom. Come on. We're going to Saks.

HAWKINS
Um, there is no Saks here.

EMMA
We have a Kmart...

BARRY
A Kkkkk-kkkk
(recovers)
Fine. We'll check out the Tammy Wynette collection at Kmart, and when that doesn't work, well, I have a few party dresses in my closet, you know, for emergencies. I'll have them Fedexed. We'll have a little fashion show.

EMMA
Okay. Can we do it tomorrow? I have to go and find out if I still have a date. We can meet at my place.

DEE DEE
Won't your parents have a problem with a middle-aged man hanging out in your bedroom and dressing you?

HAWKINS
Emma doesn't live with her parents anymore.

EMMA
We don't really speak.

BARRY
My God. We are the same person. I haven't spoken to my mother in years.

EMMA
I live with my grandmother now. She's cool. She likes "the gays."

BARRY
Good. And I like "the olds." Can you do me a favor and point me in the direction of the Kmart?

EMMA
I'll give you a ride.

BARRY
In your pickup truck?

EMMA
Are you saying because I'm a lesbian I drive a pickup?

BARRY
Well, do you?

EMMA
Shut up.

They leave.

SHELDON
Anybody hungry?

ANGIE
I could drink.

SHELDON
What's around here?

TRENT
Well, I saw a Big Boy out by the highway.

SHELDON
This town has a gay bar?

They exit. Dee Dee and Hawkins are left alone.

HAWKINS
So nice to see Emma smile. She's had a rough time of it.

DEE DEE
I gathered that.

HAWKINS
Even before this whole Prom controversy. When she came out, her parents were...well, they threw her out of the house.

DEE DEE
Really?

HAWKINS
She was 16. It was pretty ugly. Anyway, thank you for helping her. Or trying to.

Hawkins starts to leave.

DEE DEE
Tell me Tom; is there a restaurant in this town with plates and cutlery?

HAWKINS
Oh. Well, um...there's an Applebees at the mall. Would you like to go?

DEE DEE
Yes. Take me now to this apples and bees place.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HALLWAY -- DAY

There is some sort of commotion going on. Alyssa notices and stops a student.

ALYSSA
What's going on?

FEMALE STUDENT
Nick's got a promposal all planned out for Kaylee. She's gonna freak out!

The crowd parts to reveal Nick with a bouquet of red roses. Two other MALE STUDENTS back him up. Everyone films it with their phones. Someone pulls Kaylee forward as everybody cheers. Emma wanders in and watches from across the room.

NICK
"SINCE J.V. FOOTBALL, I'VE BEEN ADORED, BIG MAN ON CAMPUS BUT OH, SO BORED..."
"MY LIFE WAS PERFECT BUT SO ROUTINE, I PRAYED FOR SOMEONE TO INTERVENE, AND THEN..."

NICK & ENSEMBLE
"YOU HAPPENED..."

NICK
"AND TURNED MY LIFE AROUND ENTIRELY..."

NICK & ENSEMBLE
"OH, BABY YOU HAPPENED..."

NICK
"AND LOOK WHAT HAPPENED TO ME SO GO TO PROM WITH ME, KAYLEE!"

KAYLEE
You're such an idiot! Yes!

Everyone cheers. Kevin sees Shelby.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- DAY

Kevin puts on a sombrero. Two backup singers slip in behind him with maracas in hand.

KEVIN
"THERE'S NOT ONE SUBJECT THAT I COULD PASS, BEFORE YOU WALKED INTO MY SPANISH CLASS. WAS MY HEART POUNDING? I WON'T SAY NO,'CAUSE LIFE WITHOUT YOU WAS "NO BUENO," AND THEN..."

KEVIN & ENSEMBLE
"YOU HAPPENED..."

KEVIN
"AND TURNED MY LIFE AROUND ENTIRELY..."

KEVIN & ENSEMBLE
"OH, BABY YOU HAPPENED..."

KEVIN
"AND LOOK WHAT HAPPENED TO ME, SO GO TO PROM WITH ME, SHELBY!"

SHELBY
Sí! Sí! Señor!

REVEAL Emma and Alyssa up in the stands, watching.

ALYSSA
You did it! You actually did it! We have a prom because of you! It's like a love bomb went off. I've seen like six promposals today.

EMMA
People are going to see us dancing together! And kissing! It's going to be impossible not to kiss you.

ALYSSA
Oh my God. And what's my mother going to do? She'll be in public, so she can't freak out.

EMMA
It doesn't matter what she does. This is about us. This is about us finally being us.
(then)
"AND NO MORE HIDING HOW WE FEEL ANYMORE..."

ALYSSA
"I WON'T HIDE IF YOU'RE BY MY SIDE..."

EMMA
"NOW THAT THE PROM IS BACK ON TRACK AND ONCE WE WALK INTO THAT GYM HAND IN HAND..."

EMMA & ALYSSA
"IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS THERE'S NO GOING BACK!"

ALYSSA
"AND THAT'S A PROMISE!

INT. STUDY HALL -- DAY (LATER)

Students have their heads down, studying. TIGHT on Alyssa's notebook where she's clandestinely writing AG LOVES EN. Alyssa looks up to see Emma across the room, smiling at her. This is how they have to navigate the school -- in private stolen moments.

ALYSSA
BEFORE I MET YOU, I WAS A MESS, NOT HONEST WITH MYSELF, I CONFESS..."

EMMA
"I WAS SO LONELY, A TOTAL WRECK JUST SAD AND HOPELESS? CHECK, DOUBLE-CHECK..."

The students don't notice their singing, they keep their heads down. Alyssa scribbles a note, takes off a ring, puts the ring in the folded paper and heads toward Emma.

EMMA & ALYSSA
"AND THEN YOU HAPPENED AND TURNED MY LIFE AROUND ENTIRELY, OH, BABY..."

EMMA & ALYSSA (CONT'D)
YOU HAPPENED AND LOOK WHAT HAPPENED TO ME..."

EMMA, ALYSSA & ENSEMBLE
"SOMETHING SO TRUE HAPPENED AND SOON IT'S TIME TO SHARE IT PUBLICLY AND ALL 'CAUSE YOU HAPPENED..."

Alyssa slyly drops off the note. Emma enters it, reads it -- "Will you go to prom with me? Put on the ring if it's a YES."

ALYSSA
"AND SAID YOU'D GO TO PROM WITH --"

EMMA
"SAID YOU'D GO TO PROM WITH --"

EMMA & ALYSSA
"SAID YOU'D GO TO PROM WITH ME..."

Emma puts on the ring, Alyssa grins.

ENSEMBLE
"YOU HAPPENED! YOU HAPPENED! YOU HAPPENED! LOOK WHAT. HAPPENED TO ME..."

The bell rings. Emma and Alyssa exchange sweet looks as they go. Their PINKIES barely touch. But Kaylee and Shelby clock this.

SHELBY
What the hell was that?

INT. APPLEBEES -- NIGHT

Dee Dee and Hawkins are in a booth.

HAWKINS
I save up all my money and I go to New York every summer. I see as many Broadway shows as I can. When I run out of money, I second act 'em.

(MORE)

HAWKINS (CONT'D)
My point is I've seen you many, many times. I missed your Eleanor.

DEE DEE
"You didn't miss a thing."

HAWKINS
Are you choking?

DEE DEE
No. I was doing Eleanor. That was the voice I used...

HAWKINS
Oh. It's uncanny.

Mrs. Greene crosses with a FRIEND.

MRS. GREENE
Mr. Hawkins?

HAWKINS
Mrs. Greene.

MRS. GREENE
Ms. Glickman.

DEE DEE
Allen. Dee Dee Allen. Do you not have the internet in Indiana? Just type in Dee Dee. I'm the second one that comes up after Dee Dee Myers, whoever that is.

HAWKINS
She was Clinton's press secretary.

DEE DEE
Whatever. There's no excuse for ignorance is my point.

MRS. GREENE
You and your friends know nothing about us, about our town, about our people. And yet, you feel justified in telling us what to do.

HAWKINS
Miss Allen is a Tony Award winning Broadway star --

MRS. GREENE
Well, I suggest she stick to acting.

(MORE)

MRS. GREENE (CONT'D)
Clearly she is a much more compelling personality when someone tells her where to stand and what to say.

Mrs. Greene and her friend leave.

HAWKINS
I'm sorry about that. You have to understand this town's been through a lot. We had an auto parts factory that closed down because of outsourcing. A lot of families left.

DEE DEE
We didn't mean to make things worse.

HAWKINS
And I appreciate that. It's just people are angry and scared and powerless. When that happens, you look for a scapegoat. Not that I'm making excuses for her...

DEE DEE
Let's drop it. You know, I've never said this before to someone, but: tell me about you.

HAWKINS
About me? Huh. I don't know. I'm just a small town principal. It can be frustrating but at least I have a job.
(shyly)
Single.

DEE DEE
Sorry?

HAWKINS
I'm single. Just putting that out there.

DEE DEE
Really? I'm surprised.

HAWKINS
I'm surprised you're surprised. There are two things in life I'm passionate about -- Broadway Musicals and Secondary School Administration. I typed that into a dating website once and a little message popped up that said "You will have zero matches ever."

DEE DEE
But you're smart, you're good-looking...

HAWKINS
...and if I liked NASCAR and beer I'd fit right in.
(then)
I grew up 20 miles from here. This is my home. But as long as I can remember, I've felt like an alien. I look at people like you, and I think how lucky you are to be surrounded by your *people*...

DEE DEE
Well, I wasn't *born* on Broadway. I'm from Zelienople, PA. I grew up *dirt* poor. You know my prom story? I sold my aquarium to buy my dress, THAT'S my prom story. This glittering, magical icon who everyone loves and everyone thinks they know? I INVENTED that. Deep down, I'm a small town kid, just like you. And I'm *also* single. Well, *divorced*...

HAWKINS
I think I read about that. Eddie Sharpe. The talk show host?

DEE DEE
It lasted 15 heart-pulverizing years. He's a parasite. He's got a hit TV show and he's still bleeding me dry. I hate his money-sucking guts.

HAWKINS
Well, you gave it a good shot. That's commendable. For me, relationships have a 6-month expiration date.

DEE DEE
It wasn't really 15 years. I mean, I wasn't... ...*present* for more than three. I was touring. Doing concerts. He wanted kids at one point. A girl makes choices, you know? He's still a loser, don't get me wrong. But there's two sides to every story.

HAWKINS
I imagine it's not easy. Being Dee Dee Allen. Being a Broadway star.

DEE DEE
It is a lot of work. And the truth is Broadway is changing. And I'm getting older. Not old, just older. Sometimes I think I should just quit.

HAWKINS
No. Please. You can't do that!

DEE DEE
Why?

HAWKINS
I need you to keep doing what you do.
(then)
"MY DAYS HAVE LITTLE GLAMOUR, WRITING MEMOS, MAKING CALLS AND WINCING AT THE GRAMMAR WRITTEN ON THE BATHROOM WALLS, IT'S ALL SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND BUDGET SIZE AND WADING THROUGH RED TAPE, THAT'S WHY I LOVE THE THEATRE, IT'S HOW I ESCAPE..."

DEE DEE
So theatre's a distraction...is that what you're saying?

HAWKINS
No, a distraction is momentary. An escape helps you heal.

EXT. BROADWAY -- NIGHT (1998)

A very sweet Hawkins makes his way down Broadway, marveling at the glamour, the excitement. He enters a theatre, a marquee reveals he is seeing "Swallow the Moon."

MR. HAWKINS
"WE LOOK TO YOU, TO TAKE US AWAY FROM THE SOUL-CRUSHING JOBS AND EMASCULATING PAY..."

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE -- NIGHT (1998)

Hawkins makes his way down the aisle to his seat.

MR. HAWKINS
"WHEN OUR LIVES COME UP SHORT AND OUR HOPES ARE SAD AND FEW YOU WHISK US OFF TO SOMEPLACE STRANGE AND NEW..."

He takes his seat, excited.

MR. HAWKINS (CONT'D (CONT'D)
"WE LOOK TO YOU, IN GOOD TIMES AND BAD, THE WORLDS YOU CREATE, MAKE THE REAL ONE SEEM LESS SAD..."

The curtain RISES, revealing Dee Dee in place, she gets a huge ovation. Mr. Hawkins' eyes glisten with emotion.

MR. HAWKINS (CONT'D)
"THE CURTAIN GOES UP AND EVERY NOW AND THEN, IT FEELS AS IF WE'RE COMING HOME AGAIN, YES, COMING HOME AGAIN..."

INT. APPLEBEE'S -- NIGHT

He continues singing to Dee Dee.

MR. HAWKINS
"WE NEED A PLACE TO RUN TO WHEN EVERYTHING GOES WRONG, WHERE THE ANSWER TO EACH PROBLEM IS TO BURST INTO A SONG. AND STANDARD RULES OF LOGIC JUST SIMPLY DON'T APPLY, WHEN PEOPLE DANCE IN UNISON AND NO ONE WONDERS WHY..."

DEE DEE
You make it sound so beautiful.

HAWKINS
"WE LOOK TO YOU, AS STRANGE AS IT SEEMS, WHEN REALITY GOES TO SCARY, NEW EXTREMES..."

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE -- NIGHT (1998)

The performance ends and Dee Dee gets a standing ovation. Hawkins is the first up, and he is cheering the loudest. It's incredibly sweet. The rest of the CAST joins her for curtain call as she receives a bouquet of flowers, Hawkins looks around the theatre, very emotional.

MR. HAWKINS
"SO DON'T EVER GIVE UP AND THIS I GUARANTEE, NEXT TIME YOU THINK NO ONE CARES, YOU CAN LOOK TO ME..."

INT. APPLEBEE'S -- NIGHT

DEE DEE
Thank you. That means a lot.

HAWKINS
No, thank you.

INT. GRANDMA BEA'S HOUSE -- DAY

It's a typical midwestern house. Barry is looking at family pictures. He finds one of Emma and her Grandmother, BEA -- clearly taken at the photo department of a chain store. He is looking at it when Bea enters with a tray of lemonade.

BARRY
Nice picture.

BEA
It's terrible. Look at the backdrop. Clouds? Are we flying?

BARRY
It's sweet.

BEA
Well, you know, she needed proof that she was still part of a family, and nothing says family like a Sears family portrait.

She hands him a lemonade. He drinks it.

BARRY
Is there booze in this?

BEA
There sure is.

BARRY
When you said lemonade --

BEA
It's Indiana lemonade.

BARRY
Okay. I love you. You're the cool grandmother I never had. Mine was all about sour candies and shame.

BEA
I'm not cool. I just have zero tolerance for bullshit, which I happen to think is a Republican value. At least it used to be.

BARRY
You're a Republican?

BEA
You can still like pot and hate big government.

BARRY
You are a crazy, beautiful person. Okay -- let me ask you something. What happened with Emma and her parents? How did she end up living with you?

Bea takes a deep breath.

BEA
Ah, my daughter was such a good kid. Straight A's. 4 H club. Played the guitar. She was a lot like Emma, actually, when she was young. Then she went to Kelley and got her MBA and met Alan. He was her TA. They got married and had Emma. Then they started playing golf all the time.

BARRY
I don't get golf.

BEA
And when Emma came out, they couldn't handle it. "What can't you handle?" I said. "Reality?" I raised my daughter to be strong. I thought she was. Anyway, Alan got a job offer in Baltimore and they asked me to take Emma.

BARRY
I'm sorry.

BEA
You're not a mother, so you can't know what it was like for me to see my daughter give up her child. They offered me $200 a month for expenses.

Barry can see the toll the ordeal has taken on Bea. He gives her a long hug. He sits back down, raises his glass.

BARRY
To bad parents and their broken progeny.

BEA
Emma's doing fine. She's a strong kid.

BARRY
I'm not talking about her.

Barry takes a swig, quietly emotional.

BEA
Oh no. You got kicked out too?

BARRY
Well...I left before they could do that.

Grandma lifts her glass to him and they both take a swig of lemonade. Barry notices a photo of Bea as a young woman.

BARRY (CONT'D)
Is that...were you at Woodstock?

BEA
No. Altamont. Yep, Barry...life has been a barrel of laughs.

Emma comes down with a sad dress. They both turn to look.

EMMA
So the only nice dress I have is this.

BARRY
Wow, so you could wear that to your prom or it might also work if you were a flight attendant for Kosovo Airlines.

BEA
It's official. I like him.

BARRY
Listen, I don't really know you and you don't really know me, but please, let me dress you for the prom.

BEA
He's Grandma Bea approved.

EMMA
I don't know...this is all so crazy. What did you wear to your prom?

BARRY
Well. I was going to wear a silver tux...

INT. BARRY'S BEDROOM PAST -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The YOUNG BARRY dresses in front of the mirror in his childhood bedroom. He looks vulnerable.

BARRY (V.O.)
...with matching turquoise cummerbund and tie, and those contacts that change your eye color to aqua blue...

INT. GRANDMA BEA'S HOUSE -- DAY

We are back in the present.

BARRY
...but I never... I didn't, uh...
(he becomes emotional)
This isn't about me, this is about you and I promise: you are going to have the night of your life. What's your date wearing?

EMMA
I don't know. I've never been to her house. Her mother doesn't know about us.

BARRY
How long have you been together?

EMMA
A year and a half.

BARRY
Oh, honey.

EMMA
But she's coming out tonight big time. That's the plan. Oh, I'm really scared.

BARRY
Look. I never went to my prom because like your mystery girlfriend, I didn't have your courage.

EXT. GYM PAST -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A young Barry stands outside of the gym, resplendent in his silver tux. Music blasts from within. He sees happy hetero couples running in arm and arm. One particularly handsome boy strides by with his posse. Barry watches him walk into the gym. The sense is that he is Barry's crush, and that he has no idea. Barry turns and walks away.

INT. GRANDMA BEA'S HOUSE -- DAY

We are back in the present.

BARRY
The point is, you are brave. You made all this happen. When you walk into that gym tonight, you know what people are going to see? The bravest person on the planet.

EMMA
I don't know. This is hard. Does every girl go through this?

BARRY
Of course!

BEGIN MONTAGE. As Barry describes the exciting action, we see the various teen girls of Edgewater Indiana dressing for the Prom.

EXT. INDIANA -- DAY

A FLY OVER of the midwestern houses and cul de sacs of Edgewater. The comfortable houses all look the same.

BARRY (V.O.)
All across town, girls are spraying on their tans and whitening their teeth ...

INT. HOUSE -- DAY

GIRL #1 uses an ultraviolet teeth whitener.

INT. HOUSE 2 -- DAY

GIRL #2 glues too many crystals around her eyes.

INT. HOUSE 3 -- DAY

GIRL #3 struggles to pull a dress onto GIRL #4.

BARRY (V.O.)
They're trying to look their best for the prom, but they're wasting their time. They might as well be wearing a garbage bag with the word "whore" spray-painted on it, you know why?

INT. BEA'S HOUSE -- DAY

Emma and Bea look to Barry, waiting for the answer.

BARRY
Because they're whores. Kidding. It's because they don't have the glow you have right now.

EMMA
I trust you completely; and that's kind of scary too.

BARRY
Can we mall it?

EMMA
Is that okay?

BEA
I think you should mall the hell out of it!

INT. EDGEWATER MALL -- DAY

Barry and Emma enter the mall and stride through it.

BARRY
"I CAN TELL YOU'RE FEELING WARY, BUT YOU CAN COUNT ON UNCLE BARRY, HE TURN THIS BUTCHIE DUCK INTO A SWAN..
(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)
OUR WHOLE LOOK COULD USE A SHAKE-UP, YOU CAN BORROW ALL MY MAKE-UP AND THE PAIR OF SPANX I CURRENTLY HAVE ON..."

EMMA
I think I'll pass.

INT. EDGEWATER MALL -- FOREVER 21 -- DAY

Barry is flipping through the dresses on a rack, taking the odd one out and frowning, taking another out and tossing it.

BARRY
"TREAT THE WHOLE WORLD LIKE YOUR RUNWAY, MAKE IT FIERCE, BUT IN A FUN WAY, TRY TO FLIP YOUR HAIR LIKE CHER AND DRAG QUEENS DO..."

INT. EDGEWATER MALL -- LAZURAS MAKE UP COUNTER -- DAY

Barry is smearing various lipstick shades on Emma's lips.

BARRY
"AND I DON'T MEAN TO BE RUDE, DEAR, BUT YOU COULD USE SOME ATTITUDE DEAR...LET'S SHOW THE SCHOOL TONIGHT BELONGS TO YOU..."

INT. EDGEWATER MALL -- DSW -- DAY

Barry is jamming various shoes on Emma's feet.

BARRY
"ONE THING'S UNIVERSAL, LIFE'S NO DRESS REHEARSAL, SO WHY NOT MAKE SOME WAVES BEFORE, IT'S THROUGH?"

He extracts a red pump with a 4 inch heel. She grimaces.

BARRY (CONT'D)
"GO BIG, OR YOU'VE BLOWN IT IT'S TIME THAT YOU OWN IT LET'S MAKE IT CLEAR THAT TONIGHT BELONGS TO YOU..."

INT. EDGEWATER MALL -- FOOD COURTYARD -- DAY

Barry and Emma refuel.

BARRY
Now, no matter what we choose, you've got to remember to sell it.

EMMA
How do I do that?

BARRY
Allow Ms. Glickman to demonstrate.

BARRY (CONT'D)
"YOU MIGHT FIND THIS DISCONCERTING, BUT OL' BARRY'S DONE SOME FLIRTING, TRY TO BAT YOUR EYES AND SMIZE EACH TIME YOU GRIN..."

Barry flirts with a passing FOOD WORKER. The worker, distracted, walks into a trash can and spills a tray.

EMMA
"I CAN GUESS YOUR WHOLE AGENDA..."

BARRY
"YOU BE ELPHIE; I'M GALINDA!"

BARRY & EMMA
"IT'S MAKEOVER TIME SO WHY NOT JUST GIVE IN?"

INT. EDGEWATER MALL -- DAY

Barry and Emma stride through the mall in the opposite direction, now burdened with a dozen bags.

BARRY & EMMA
"ONE THING'S UNIVERSAL, LIFE'S NO DRESS REHEARSAL, SO WHY NOT MAKE SOME WAVES, BEFORE IT'S THROUGH. GO BIG, OR YOU'VE BLOWN IT..."

EMMA
"IT'S TIME THAT I OWN IT..."

BARRY & EMMA
"LET'S MAKE IT CLEAR THAT TONIGHT BELONGS TO YOU..."

BARRY
What?

EMMA
"BELONGS TO ME!"

Barry and Emma burst out of the mall.

INT. KAYLEE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Kaylee and Shelby get ready for Prom, zipping each other up, posing in the full length mirror.

KAYLEE
Oh God. I can't believe this is finally happening.

SHELBY
She almost ruined it for all of us.

KAYLEE
Well, what goes around comes around. You look hot!

SHELBY
You look so hot!

KAYLEE & SHELBY
"WELL, I HATE TO SOUND CONCEITED BUT THE BOYS GET OVERHEATED, WHEN I STRIKE A POSE OR TWO LIKE THUS!"

They strike a few poses.

KAYLEE
"AND YOU HAVE TO HAND IT TO ME I MEAN, EVEN I WOULD DO ME..."

KAYLEE & SHELBY
"LET'S SHOW THE WORLD TONIGHT BELONGS TO US..."

EXT. VARIOUS SUBURBAN HOUSES-- DAY

The teen girls of Edgewater emerge from their houses and walk to the waiting limos. The boys, dressed in variations of the classic tuxedo, open the car doors for them.

KAYLEE & SHELBY / FEMALE STUDENTS
"ONE THING'S UNIVERSAL, LIFE'S NO DRESS REHEARSAL, EXCUSE ME WHILE I STATE THE OBVIOUS, GO BIG OR YOU'VE BLOWN IT, IT'S TIME THAT WE OWN IT AND MAKE IT CLEAR THAT TONIGHT, BELONGS TO US..."

INT. ALYSSA'S HOUSE -- BEDROOM -- DAY

Alyssa is smoothing her dress and fiddling with her hair. She looks at herself in the mirror. She looks beautiful, but she has a look of worry on her face (reminiscent of the young Barry in his flashback). MRS. GREENE enters.

MRS. GREENE
Oh, you look so beautiful. You should always wear your hair that way.

ALYSSA
Mom. I want you to know what's going to happen tonight.

MRS. GREENE
Can we not spoil this? Please? I have worked very hard on this night, and I have a right to enjoy it too. Now, you're going to have a wonderful prom like a normal girl. I've made sure of that.

ALYSSA
What does that mean?

MRS. GREENE
"I DON'T LIKE WHEN STRANGERS GET IN MY WAY, OR ANYONE WHO MESSES WITH THE P.T.A., WELL MAYBE THAT'S JUST ME, BUT TRUST ME. FIXING LITTLE PROBLEMS IS WHAT I DO, NOW EVERYONE IS HAPPY, I PROMISE YOU, AND I WOULD NEVER MISS A NIGHT LIKE THIS ALYSSA, YOU'RE MY SUPERSTAR, NOW GET YOUR ASS IN THE CAR..."

INT. ELK'S LODGE -- NIGHT

Lights come up on the prom in full swing.

STUDENTS
"TONIGHT BELONGS TO US, TONIGHT BELONGS TO US, OO OO OO, TONIGHT BELONGS TO US, OO OO OO, ONE THING'S UNIVERSAL, LIFE'S NO DRESS REHEARSAL, EXCUSE ME WHILE I STATE THE OBVIOUS. GO BIG OR YOU'VE BLOWN IT, IT'S TIME THAT WE OWN IT, AND MAKE IT CLEAR THAT TONIGHT BELONGS TO, MAKE IT CLEAR THAT TONIGHT BELONGS TO US!

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

Trent, Dee Dee, Angie and Sheldon wait outside the gym. Emma arrives with Barry. Emma is beautifully and expertly put together by Barry. She looks great, but not entirely comfortable with the look.

DEE DEE
You look beautiful!

EMMA
You're sure it's not too girly?

ANGIE
Just the right amount of girly.

DEE DEE
(to BARRY)
Well played.

BARRY
Where's your date?

EMMA
We're meeting in the gym. She's still a little shy about all this.

BARRY
Okay. This is where we leave you. Our work is done.
(Hugs her.)
Go! Have the time of your life!

EMMA
Can you walk me in? I'm a little nervous.

BARRY
Sure. Hold on tight.

Barry takes her arm and they enter the gym.

TRENT
We did good you guys!

ANGIE
Who wants a drink?

SHELDON
I'm buying.

Angie, Trent and Sheldon trot off in search of booze. Dee Dee hesitates. She looks around the parking lot. Something doesn't seem right.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

Emma enters with Barry. There are only a few, pathetic decorations hanging limply from the walls. Hawkins stands in the middle of the empty gym talking into his phone. He is clearly distressed. Emma and Barry look around, dumbfounded.

EMMA
What's going on?

Hawkins puts his hand over the mouthpiece of his phone.

HAWKINS
I'm just piecing this together... give me a second.

Hawkins continues with his call.

EMMA
Where is everybody?

BARRY
What's going on here?

Dee Dee, Angie, Sheldon & Trent enter.

DEE DEE
Something's wrong. The parking lot is completely empty.

SHELDON
My God. What's the theme of this prom: "Death Row"?

EMMA
Mr. Hawkins, where are all the kids? I don't understand.

INT. ELK'S LODGE -- NIGHT

We see MRS. GREENE & ALYSSA arriving at another, well-decorated prom.

ALYSSA
I don't understand. Why aren't we at the gym?

MRS. GREENE
At the last minute there was a problem and we had to change venues.

ALYSSA
Mom. What is going on? Tell me the truth.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

HAWKINS hangs up and turns to address them.

HAWKINS
The courts told the PTA they had to hold an inclusive prom --

INT. ELK'S LODGE -- NIGHT

MRS. GREENE
Don't worry. Everything's fine. We did what we were required to do.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

HAWKINS
There was some resistance, so the parents met without my knowledge and organized two proms.

INT. ELK'S LODGE -- NIGHT

MRS. GREENE
We gave her a prom.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

HAWKINS
One for all the kids at the Elks lodge in town.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM/INT. ELK'S LODGE -- NIGHT

We see a split screen of Alyssa and Emma realizing what has happened.

ALYSSA & EMMA
Oh my God!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

HAWKINS
And this one...just for you.

Emma is in shock.

INT. ELK'S LODGE -- NIGHT

MRS. GREENE
Now go have fun. I'll be here to make sure everything is perfect.

ALYSSA
Wait!

MRS. GREENE walks away.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

EMMA
Wait. No. I got texts from kids at school. Everybody said it was here.

HAWKINS
They were lying to you. That was part of the plan.

ANGIE
Oh my God.

INT. ELK'S LODGE -- NIGHT

Alyssa confronts Kaylee and Shelby.

ALYSSA
You lied to me!

KAYLEE
Yeah, who's the liar?

SHELBY
We know about you and Emma. Believe me, we're doing you a favor.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

Emma begins to feel the full weight of the betrayal.

HAWKINS
Emma. I'm so sorry.

TRENT
They met in secret? The whole town kept this from her?

ANGIE
That is so cruel.

BARRY
I think I'm going to cry.

DEE DEE
Oh my God. This is a disaster.

SHELDON
This is a PR problem --

DEE DEE
No, Sheldon. We *had* a PR problem. This is a full blown scandal. This is the end of my career.

HAWKINS
Wait. Is that why you came here? For publicity?

DEE DEE
Don't start with me, Tom. You do not know how the world works.

HAWKINS
Yes. I do. Unfortunately.

EMMA
(numb, slowly)
"ONE THING'S UNIVERSAL, LIFE'S NO DRESS REHEARSAL, WHEN PEOPLE FIND A SCAPEGOAT TO CONDEMN... WE WENT BIG AND YET WE'VE BLOWN IT, WELL I GUESS I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT, ALL ALONG TONIGHT BELONGED TO THEM..."

Emma's phone rings. Emma answers.

EMMA (CONT'D)
Alyssa?

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM/INT. ELK'S LODGE -- NIGHT

We see a split screen of Alyssa and Emma on the phone.

ALYSSA
I swear, I had no idea.

EMMA
How could you not know? You were on the prom committee.

ALYSSA
It was Kaylee and Shelby. They figured out we were together and they made sure I didn't find out. They didn't want me to tell you.

EMMA
I don't believe you.

ALYSSA
Do you think I would do something like this to you?

EMMA
Then come meet me.

ALYSSA
I can't.
(crying.)
My mom is here.

EMMA
Well, leave her. Then tell her you're gay! Tell her we're in love! That was the plan, right?

ALYSSA
I can't. It's bad enough that Kaylee and Shelby know. I'm sorry.

EMMA
You're sorry. Great. That fixes everything. Have fun at the normal person's prom!

She hangs up.

ALYSSA
Emma? Emma?

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- NIGHT

BARRY
This is what we're going to do. We're getting in the car and we're going to that other prom. They can't stop us from --

EMMA
No! Enough! This is already the worst night of my life! Just stop helping me!

She runs out.

ANGIE
I'll talk to her.

Angie runs after Emma. Hawkins, Dee Dee, Trent, Sheldon & Barry stand alone in the gym.

INT. ELK'S LODGE -- NIGHT

The kids at the real prom dance with intensity.

STUDENTS
"LET'S MAKE IT CLEAR THAT TONIGHT BELONGS TO, MAKE IT CLEAR THAT TONIGHT BELONGS, MAKE IT CLEAR THAT TONIGHT BELONGS TO US...!"

SMASH TO BLACK.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- STEPS -- DAY

Mrs. Greene is making a statement to the press on behalf of the PTA. She is more rattled than we have seen her. She is surrounded by a HUGE AMOUNT of reporters, it's a national news story now.

MRS. GREENE
I've been asked to read a statement.
(reading)
What happened here was not the result of some elaborate plan to humiliate this girl, as has been reported in the press. The James Madison High School parent-teachers association felt Emma would not be safe if we allowed her to attend Prom with the other students because the uncomfortable truth is there are people in our community who are offended by her life choices. We felt this arrangement, while not ideal, was the only course of action available to us. Thank you.

Mrs. Greene attempts to leave but is stopped by questions.

INDIANA REPORTER #2
Mrs. Greene! Are you homophobic?

INDIANA REPORTER #3
How does excluding a student protect her?

MRS. GREENE
Look. This is uncomfortable for me...to be in front of a camera like this, to read terrible things about my town in the paper. I'm just a mother, not any kind of a spokesperson, and I love all the students of James Madison High as much as my own daughter.
(MORE)

MRS. GREENE (CONT'D)
The truth is we are in this situation because a group of people, privileged people from New York, who know nothing about us, came down here just to get publicity. They are the villains. You should be writing about them, not us.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Angie and Emma are watching Mrs. Greene on Emma's laptop. Emma looking particularly depressed. Angie snaps the laptop shut.

EMMA
I cannot wrap my head around all this. It's a nightmare. Oh God.

ANGIE
I want to be the cockeyed optimist here because I played Nelly Forbush in South Pacific once, but...I agree with you. This is horrible.

EMMA
Thanks for hanging out with me these past couple of days. You've been a good friend.

ANGIE
(eyes welling)
I have?

EMMA
You have. You seem surprised.

ANGIE
It's just...when you're a struggling performer you spend so much time worrying about yourself. Staying in the game, controlling your day drinking.
(a beat, emotional)
You've made me care about something more than myself. Thanks, kid.

Emma smiles, but seems so low.

ANGIE (CONT'D)
Ok, look at me. And listen -- you'll get through this, I know it.

EMMA
How do you know?

ANGIE
You're like me. You may not know it, but you're resilient. I knew it the first time I saw you, I thought "that girl has guts."

PUSH IN on Emma, at rock bottom.

EMMA
I thought when my parents gave me away and stopped loving me that it would never feel any worse, you know? And then I broke up with my girlfriend, and that felt worse.

She starts to cry. Angie dries her tears.

ANGIE
(feeling for her)
Oh honey.

EMMA
And now this. There's so much hate out there in the world, and I can feel it. It hurts so much. I've never felt so alone in my life.

ANGIE
You're not alone, honey. You've got me. We are ride or die. And you have friends.

EMMA
Oh yeah? Where are they?

EXT. HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

The bus pulls up. Barry, Dee Dee, Trent and Sheldon exit, march up the lawn.

INT. HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Grandma Bea opens the door.

DEE DEE
How is she?

BEA
Holding tight. C'mon in.

INT. BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Barry pops in, followed by Trent, Dee Dee and Sheldon.

BARRY
Emma? Can we come in? We brought Haagen-Dazs.

TRENT
It's fancy ice cream.

EMMA
I know what Haagen-Dazs is. Hand it over.

BARRY
How are you? Are you okay?

EMMA
Oh, I'm just awesome. The whole world is talking about me. They're making it sound like I'm responsible for this. No one is talking about the hate. There's just so much hate.
(holding up the ice cream)
I'm going to need more of this.

BARRY
Listen, I know you said you don't want us to help anymore but we can't let them get away with this. We have to fight back. That PTA woman, who does she think she is?

TRENT
She's a monster, that's for sure.

BARRY
Sheldon, what can we do about her?

SHELDON
I don't know. She's spun this whole thing to make herself look like the victim. She's good. If she didn't shop at The Dress Barn, she could work in PR.

DEE DEE
I know that everyone is angry, but we have to face the fact that we've made matters worse. I think the best thing we can do is disinfect our things and go home.

BARRY
No! We are not leaving.

DEE DEE
We are always not leaving! Please let me leave this horrible place!

BARRY
No. We are staying and we're going to turn this thing around. We are going to take back the press.

TRENT
How?

BARRY
Emma, you gotta step up and be the face of this story. You've gotta go on TV and show the world who the real victim is.

ANGIE
And that's going to get her a Prom?

BARRY
This is not about a Prom anymore. This is about right and wrong. We need a national audience. Prime time. How about Jimmy Fallon?

SHELDON
Look. I can't just pull Jimmy Fallon out of my ass. He books months in advance. You want a big audience fast, we gotta use our ace in the hole.
(to Dee Dee)
One phone call to Eddie Sharpe is all it will take.

DEE DEE
No. I am not calling that bastard.

BARRY
Just ask him for a favor.

DEE DEE
No! If I ask him for a favor he will want something in return and what he will want is the Hamptons house. He's been trying to get it for years. You know how many Broadway cruises I had to book to pay for that house? No way.
(MORE)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
I would rather suck my own eyes with a Dust Buster than call that leech.

BARRY
Fine. Sheldon, get that girl on TV. I don't care if it's a cutaway on Family Guy, just get it done. Work your magic.

Sheldon exits.

BARRY (CONT'D)
Okay. Great.

EMMA
No! Not great. Not great. I'm sorry but there is no way I am getting in front of a camera and telling my story to millions of people. I cannot do that. Just go! Just get on your bus and go home. We lost, okay? Deal with it.

They all file towards the door. To Barry --

TRENT
You know, there might be another way to rid this community and by extension this nation of the cancer of intolerance.

BARRY
Why are you here? I thought you had a tour.

TRENT
Oh. Indianapolis was cancelled. As was Kansas City, Little Rock, Orlando and the naval base at Guantanamo Bay. What I'm thinking I might do is this: venture forth and seek out the young people. And when I find them, I will simply talk with them. Converse. Rap, in the non-musical sense. Communication may lead to understanding and understanding to, dare I say it, love. Anon.

Trent leaves.

BARRY
Honey, I know this is hard, but if you do nothing, they win.

ANGIE
Don't worry. She's just got stage fright. I'll talk to the kid.

The others leave. Angie and Emma are alone.

ANGIE (CONT'D)
Jeez Louis, you've almost eaten that whole pint!
(a beat)
Let's go get some more. Two spoons this time.

INT. EMMA'S LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Angie waits, Emma enters with more ice cream and two spoons. They begin to eat.

EMMA
Before you give me a lecture or kick me to death with those crazy antelope legs of yours or whatever you're going to do, I know I should do something; I just can't.

ANGIE
Look, kid. Not everybody gets a chance to step out of the chorus. You got to do it for all us people who used to be called "gypsies."

EMMA
I'm too scared.

ANGIE
Let me tell you a story. It's 1975. The original company of "Chicago" is in previews and the worst flu in history hits the cast. They're down to the third cover for the role of Roxie Hart. And she's scared, just like you. So Fosse, who's a real ball-buster, is putting her through her paces. But she's petrified, and even worse, performing the routines like a robot. And the Foss says to her, "Hey, kid! Snap out of it! You're freaking out!
(MORE)

ANGIE (CONT'D)
You got the steps, you got the notes, but where's the zazz, baby?!" And though she'd never heard that word before she immediately knew what it meant. And that girl went out there and crushed that performance so hard the whole audience was standing on their feet screaming bloody murder.

EMMA
And that girl was you?

ANGIE
How fucking old do you think I am? This was in 1975. The point is every Fosse girl knows that story. It's all about finding your own inner strength...
(then)
"WHEN A CHALLENGE LIES AHEAD AND YOU ARE FILLED WITH DREAD AND WORRY, GIVE IT SOME ZAZZ!"

Angie begins to dance around the living room, pushing back chairs and table. The track lighting dims, and the space suddenly seems very theatrical.

ANGIE (CONT'D)
"IF YOUR COURAGE DISAPPEARS, WHAT'LL GET YOUR FEARS TO SCURRY? GIVE IT SOME ZAZZ! ZAZZ IS STYLE PLUS CONFIDENCE, IT MAY SEEM CORNY OR KITSCH, BUT WHEN SCARED OR ON THE FENCE, YOU'LL FIND THAT ZAZZ WILL SOON MAKE FEAR BECOME YOUR BITCH. AND IF FOLKS SAY YOU CAN'T WIN, WHAT'LL STOP THEM IN A HURRY? GIVE IT SOME ZAZZ! THERE'S NO CONTEST FOR A GIRL WHO HAS SOME RAZZMATAZZ. SO CALL THEIR BLUFF, AND STRUT YOUR STUFF, LIKE NO CHICK IN THIS HICK TOWN HAS, INSTEAD OF GIVING UP, GIVE IT SOME ZAZZ!"

EMMA
I just don't think I can do it. The thought of getting up in front of all of those people. Look at my hands. They're shaking.

ANGIE
If your hands are shaking...
(sung)
"JUST TURN 'EM INTO JAZZ HANDS!"
(spoken)
Now doesn't that feel better?

EMMA
No.

ANGIE
Try this.

She moves Emma's hands into a Fosse position.

EMMA
What are you doing?

ANGIE
It'll give you some confidence.
Hand here.
(pushes Emma's pelvis forward)
And try this. Now move.

EMMA
This is awkward.

ANGIE
You don't understand the concept of zazz. The zazz is not the moves. The zazz comes from within. Do the moves and give 'em some zazz.

EMMA
I don't know...

ANGIE
Now, close your eyes. Think of Mrs. Greene.

Emma snaps into a Fosse pose.

ANGIE (CONT'D)
Think about that fake prom.

Emma snaps into another Fosse pose.

ANGIE (CONT'D)
And think about finally doing something about it.

Emma snaps into another Fosse pose.

ANGIE (CONT'D)
I'm seeing it! I'm seeing your zazz! Now follow me.
(then)
"DO LIKE THE BRAVE AND BOSSY DO, AND IF THEY TEAR YOU APART, ASK WHAT WOULD BOB FOSSE DO? HE'D MAKE THE PEOPLE HAVE A STEP BALL CHANGE OF HEART..."

ANGIE & EMMA
Ball change!

ANGIE & EMMA (CONT'D)
"AND IF FOLKS SAY YOU CAN'T WIN, WHAT'LL STOP THEM IN A HURRY?"

EMMA
"GIVE IT SOME ZAZZ..."

ANGIE & EMMA
"THERE'S NO CONTEST FOR A GIRL WHO HAS SOME RAZZMATAZZ..."

ANGIE
"SO CALL THEIR BLUFF, BAM!"

EMMA
"AND STRUT MY STUFF, BAM!"

ANGIE & EMMA
"LIKE NO CHICK IN THIS HICK TOWN HAS, INSTEAD OF GIVING UP GIVE IT SOME ZAZZ!"

They fall back into the couch laughing, the lights slowly reappear to normal.

ANGIE
Now that you found your zazz, it's time to show it to the world. You think you know how?

EMMA
(confidently)
Yeah.

INT. DEE DEE'S HOTEL ROOM -- DAY

Barry and Dee Dee are both prone on Dee Dee's bed, their faces covered in a light green facial product watching "My Best Friend's Wedding" on the motel TV. Barry is restless.

BARRY
We shouldn't be doing this.

DEE DEE
It's Romcom Friday. Romcom Friday is sacred.

BARRY
(getting up)
Dee Dee! We should be helping Emma. We've got to get her on TV.

DEE DEE
Sheldon is on it. Hey!
(stopping him)
You have to take care of yourself before you take care of other people. It's like when you're on a plane.

BARRY
What?

DEE DEE
If the mask thing drops, you're supposed to put it on yourself first, then your child. It's the law. Now, give in to romcom Friday. Heal yourself first. Let the mask work its magic. It's Korean. They have wonderful skin for a reason.

Barry gives in reluctantly. He grabs a bag of Cheetos from the bedside table.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
You have to applaud Julia for playing such a misguided character. She's kind of the villain and I'm with her *every* step of the way.

There is a beat. PUSH IN on Dee Dee. Then --

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
Eddie took me to see this movie. It was our first date.

BARRY
It was?

DEE DEE
Yes, and afterwards, he took me to dinner.
(beat)
(MORE)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
Well I took him -- he was just starting out as a comedian then -- he had no money -- this is way before his show... 15 years, he never had any money. I picked up the check. I paid.

BARRY
Bad move.

DEE DEE
Tell me about it. I'm still paying.

They watch some more. Barry considers her.

BARRY
Can I make an observation?

DEE DEE
Is it a pleasant observation, or an irritating one?

BARRY
You're not over him.

DEE DEE
Him? No no *PLEASE* TRUST me, I am, no, I am way over him. I'm just -- mad at myself, mostly -- because I was so STUPID, such a putz.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
Stupid, I bought it, so long, believed him, every time he said, "it's nothing" "it's over" "she's meaningless..." Ten years, "I broke it off, she knows, it's over, I promise." 6, what 7? Maybe 8 times? Every time, I believed him. ME! So stupid. Yeah, I got out, and he took half my money... And now here we are, singing to trucks, and he's got his big tv show, and I still owe him half my unemployment check...

INT. DEE DEE'S NYC BEDROOM -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The lights are dimmed. Dee Dee sits in bed, watching Eddie Sharpe's talk show premiere. NOTE: we stay on Dee Dee's face, never showing Eddie on the screen...

EDDIE SHARPE'S VOICE
Guys, guys...what's today's words of wisdom?

BRO STUDIO AUDIENCE
Never sign a prenup!

Off her sadness --

INT. DEE DEE'S HOTEL ROOM -- RESUME

A moment. Dee Dee stews, definitely NOT over this.

DEE DEE
But you know the worst thing he did? The worst thing? He made me never want to trust anybody again. He took my little delicate blueberry heart and just, squashed it... And I will never NEVER let that happen again...I don't think I even could... Even if I wanted to, and I do want to, be loved by somebody, held -- NOPE. THAT's not gonna happen. Ever again. Ever.

They turn back to the TV, now thoroughly bummed. Barry searches frantically for the remote. He snaps off the TV. Barry grabs a Kleenex. Begins to remove Dee Dee's mask. They sit across from each other. Tender.

BARRY
Let me tell you something sister. Rom Com Friday is not helping us. We irradiate our faces and cry while Julia Roberts pretends to fall in love with people, instead of actually falling in love with people ourselves. It's pathetic.

DEE DEE
It's fun.

BARRY
It's getting less and less fun for me, and you, and Julia. You gotta get out there.

DEE DEE
Get out there?

BARRY
YES! You're not getting any younger, sweetheart.

DEE DEE
HOW DARE YOU, and LOOK WHO'S TALKING, and EXACTLY!!! Nobody wants me anymore. Nobody even wants the idea of me anymore.

BARRY
This is what you're going to do. You're going to put on your face, and something heartstopping -- the yellow cape, cute boots -- and march yourself right down to the principal's office, you bad, bad girl.

DEE DEE
Tom?? He's just a fan. Friend.

BARRY
He likes you.

DEE DEE
As a friend. Fan. And not even so much that anymore...

BARRY
Please. Let's cut the bullshit. I'd kill to have a guy look at me the way he looks at you.

BARRY (CONT'D)
I've been a curiosity, an experiment, a way into the club. I've never been the object of that wide-eyed, slobbering small town principal gaze. I've never experienced it.

DEE DEE
Stop it. It's like you're poking my heart with your finger.

BARRY
Your delicate still-beating blueberry heart.

DEE DEE
You really think...he likes me?

BARRY
Yes. Do it for me. If I'm going to love vicariously through someone, I want it to be you, not Julia Roberts.

DEE DEE
Barry Glickman...you're a great scene partner. And an even better friend.

She goes, then stops herself, turning, with a twinkle.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
But you *know*...

BARRY
Oh, I *knew* this was going to somehow get turned on me...

DEE DEE
...I think it's time somebody poked that little gay heart of *yours*.

BARRY
(fast)
Please no. Okay fine. Do I only go for tens when I know I'm a six? YES. Am I in a perpetual state of eating my feelings? YES but that also means I don't struggle with wrinkles...

DEE DEE
Your parents. Aren't you from Ohio?

BARRY
So?

DEE DEE
And we're in Indiana. Ohio and Indiana, they're close, right?
(off his look)
Oh, don't *judge*. I know where New York and California are. In between is where the planes fly over and presumably drop their waste.

BARRY
I know where you're driving this conversation so before we arrive I'm going to open the car door and roll out onto the highway.

DEE DEE
You have two living parents who you're never going to be closer to than you are right now. You should call them.

BARRY
No. They threw me away.

DEE DEE
DID they, though?

BARRY
YES! I told them I was gay and they told *ME* they'd take me to therapy to change myself completely. That's not love. That's not how you're supposed to be a parent.

DEE DEE
Come on. It was a different time! They didn't know any better! There was no Ellen! There was no Will and Grace! There was no...me!

BARRY
There was *Frasier!* That's the gayest show ever! That *brother?* I'm surprised America's televisions weren't bursting into flames!

DEE DEE
(quickly)
You inherently feel unlovable and unworthy of love because you haven't dealt with your painful unresolved adolescent issues, and until you do there you shall remain, there I said it, sue me.

BARRY
(dark)
Well look at you, so wise and knowledgeable. Ladies and Gentlemen, get this woman a Gay Pride Parade Grand Marshal sash, stat!

DEE DEE
First of all, Madonna and I shared that honor I'm proud to say in 1993, and we continue to correspond.
(MORE)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
Secondly, I'm being real here -- let your parents see who you are before it's too late. If you don't, you'll regret it.

BARRY
I'm not the one who should have regrets. *I* was the kid. I was the scared little sixteen year-old who needed something from them and they couldn't give it to me.

He becomes emotional and cries. She holds him. A moment.

DEE DEE
You know where everybody goes wrong? We think as children that our parents are supposed to teach us. But really, we're put on this earth to teach *them.* You should call your mom and dad. Love them enough -- forgive them enough -- to give them the opportunity to change.

PULL OUT on the two friends. Off Barry, shaken --

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HAWKINS' OFFICE -- DAY

Hawkins is working at his desk.

HAWKINS
(on phone)
There was a dare between a couple of boys on the wrestling team. Yes, and that's why I need to know if it's okay that they ate it. Well, they each had a bite. Yeah, a big bite. Thanks. I appreciate it. Bye.

Dee Dee knocks and enters, she looks spectacular.

DEE DEE
Am I interrupting something?

HAWKINS
I'm just doing some research. Trying to find out if urinal cakes are poisonous. There was an incident. How can I help you?

DEE DEE
Well, I've been wandering around town all day;
(MORE)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
I've seen "the sight." The bottom line is I thought you might want to take me out to dinner and worship me again.

HAWKINS
No thanks.

DEE DEE
Sorry?

HAWKINS
No. I would not like to do that. Now, if you'll excuse me, I've got work to do.

DEE DEE
What is going on here? All week you've been wining and dining me at Applebees and now I can't tear you away from the urinal cakes. Why is everybody so mad at me?

HAWKINS
Well, speaking for myself, it's because you're an opportunist. You came down here for publicity. You used us. You only care about yourself. You're a terrible person.

DEE DEE
How dare you! No one speaks to me like that! If we were in New York, I would snap my fingers and Dominic from props would come and beat the shit out of you!

HAWKINS
You know, meeting you in person has been colossally disappointing. You said by helping this one girl you might make the world a better place and I believed you, because I *wanted* to believe you. I wanted you to be Delores.

DEE DEE
Who the hell is Delores?

HAWKINS
From Swallow the Moon! She was joyful.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE -- NIGHT (1998)

Hawkins stares up at the stage, love struck, as Dee Dee acts her heart out in "Swallow the Moon." We PUSH IN ON his face.

HAWKINS (V.O.)
She was full of courage and hope!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HAWKINS' OFFICE -- RESUME SCENE

DEE DEE
She was fictional!

HAWKINS
But you made her real! When you sang "The Lady's Improving" to Troy Gibson, you were admitting that you weren't perfect, but you knew that you could be a better you. And that's why he didn't fire you from the circus act. Such humility and dignity. That's who I thought you were!

DEE DEE
Well. I'm not Delores. I'm just a really, really, really good actress.

HAWKINS
Yeah. You are.

DEE DEE
And you are just some hick town high school teacher who can't tell the difference between fantasy and reality.

HAWKINS
Are we done?

DEE DEE
Oh yes. We're done.

Hawkins goes back to work. Dee Dee turns and exits. There is a pause and then Dee Dee reappears.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
"THE LADY'S IMPROVING, SO DON'T GIVE UP HOPE, YOU ASK IS SHE PERFECT? MY ANSWER IS NOPE..."

HAWKINS
I know what you're doing.

DEE DEE
"HER RANGE NEEDS EXPANDING, HER EDGES NEED SANDING, BUT SHE CAN BECOME A SURE BET, SO I'M BEGGING YOU SIR, DON'T GIVE UP ON HER YET..."

HAWKINS
You're trying to appeal to the fan in me. Well, it won't work. I'm not a fan anymore.

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE -- NIGHT (1998)

Hawkins watches with a huge enchanted grin on his face as Dee Dee does "The Lady's Improving" onstage with six MALE DANCERS, also in tuxedos.

DEE DEE
"THE LADY'S IMPROVING, SO MUCH THAT SHE GLOATS, I KNOW YOU'VE GOT STANDARDS FEEL FREE TO GIVE NOTES!"

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HAWKINS' OFFICE -- RESUME SCENE

Dee Dee continues her Broadway choreography, it segues perfectly as she twirls into him.

DEE DEE
"THERE ISN'T AN ISSUE, AND THAT'S WHY I WISH YOU COULD SEE THERE'S NO REASON TO FRET, SO I'M BEGGING YOU SIR, DON'T GIVE UP ON HER YET..."

HAWKINS
Seriously, Dee Dee, this is unsettling. It's like a fantasy I don't want to have.

DEE DEE
"EVERYBODY THINKS THAT I'VE GOT SOME KINKS THAT I'LL NEVER WORK OUT, EVEN YOU'RE INCLINED TO THINK I'M UNREFINED..."

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE -- NIGHT (1998)

DEE DEE
"BUT I PROMISE WITH SOME TIME, THAT MY APTITUDE WILL CLIMB, AND YOU'LL LEAVE YOUR DOUBTS AND DISBELIEFS BEHIND..."

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HAWKINS' OFFICE -- RESUME SCENE

DEE DEE
"THE LADY'S IMPROVING, REMOVING ALL DOUBT, SHE HAS HIDDEN CHARMS THAT ARE SURE TO COME OUT, YOU'RE BOUND TO DISCOVER THIS BOOKS NOT HER COVER, SO DON'T MAKE A MOVE YOU'LL REGRET..."

INT. BROADWAY THEATRE -- NIGHT (1998)

DEE DEE
"SO I'M BEGGING YOU SIR, NO RENEGING ON HER...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HAWKINS' OFFICE -- RESUME SCENE

DEE DEE
"DON'T GIVE UP ON HER YET!"

End of song. A beat. Silence, then --

HAWKINS
Okay. I admit. That got to me.

DEE DEE
You see? I'm not a lost cause. That was an entirely selfless act. Most people would pay premium prices for that and you just got it pro bono.

HAWKINS
Okay. Not charging someone for an apology is not a selfless act.

DEE DEE
Well, what the fuck?!

HAWKINS
If you want people to like you instead of hate you, you have to be good. A good person. You have to put other people's interests before your own.

DEE DEE
You don't understand. I am a celebrity! It's all about me and it has been for years! That's the whole point of celebrity. I need to be de-programmed.
(MORE)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
I have to *unlearn* things like shoving and taking, and *learn* things like smiling and tipping. And I need help to do that. I need a teacher. Please?

HAWKINS
Let's go somewhere and talk about how to be good human beings.

DEE DEE
Apples and bees?

Off his smile --

INT. EDGEWATER MALL -- DAY

A group of students, including Shelby and Kaylee, are hanging out and about in the FOOD COURT.

KAYLEE
I saw it on CNN. They said, "Edgewater Indiana overflows with bigotry." They talked about us like we're monsters.

SHELBY
I saw a Fox News van drive down my street yesterday.

KAYLEE
At least they're on our side.

Trent approaches them.

KEVIN
Look! It's that guy from "Talk to the Hand."

NICK
What are you doing here?

TRENT
Just out for a walk. Enjoying the sweet and fetid scent of Americana. I'm from a small town myself, you know.

NICK
We're not interested.

The kids start to leave. He follows them, down an ESCALATOR to a fountain sitting area below.

TRENT
Look, there's an ideological divide between us, and I think if we got to know each other, we might be able to bridge it. I'll begin. I'm an actor. My instrument was forged in the fiery furnace that is Juilliard. I'm sure your drama teacher has told you of that institution?

SECOND STUDENT
We don't have a drama program.

TRENT
Ah. That explains your general lack of empathy. What about you?

KAYLEE
Me?

TRENT
Who are you?

KAYLEE
Kaylee.

TRENT
No, that's your name. Who *are* you? Let's say I am to play Kaylee in "The Story of Kaylee." Help me prepare.

KAYLEE
Uh... I'm a girl. A teenager. I'm a cheerleader.

TRENT
And why do you hate homosexuals?

KAYLEE
Hey! I'm a good person! Right, Shelby?

SHELBY
We all are.

FIRST STUDENT
We go to church.

FIFTH STUDENT
We're Christians.

TRENT
Ah! Okay. Now we're getting somewhere. This is something I know about. Christians follow the teachings of Christ, correct?

ALL
Yeah...

TRENT
I've played Jesus Christ on three separate occasions. I've been crucified three times; twelve if you include the reviews. I got to know J.C. very well. I don't believe he hated anyone, let alone gays.

SECOND STUDENT
But the Bible says homosexuality is wrong. And we follow the Bible.

TRENT
Okay. Well, I'm pretty sure there are rules in the Bible that you guys are breaking every day.

KAYLEE
Well, that's different.

TRENT
Is it? You can't cherry-pick the Bible, choosing which parts you want to believe.

KAYLEE
We don't do that.

TRENT
You don't? What's this?
(then)
"KAYLEE HAS A SMALL TATTOO, THAT TATTOO WOULD BE TABOO, KAYLEE GUESS WHAT WAITS FOR YOU, AN ETERNITY IN THE FIERY PITS OF HELL!"

KAYLEE
Hey!

TRENT
"SHELBY YOU SEEM SWEET TO ME, BUT IF IT HAS COME TO BE, YOU'VE LOST YOUR VIRGINITY, WE'LL BE STONING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY AS WELL..."

SHELBY
What?

TRENT
"OR WE COULD USE SOME COMMON SENSE INSTEAD, WHEN YOU'RE LOST IT ALWAYS HELPS RECALLING, THOSE IMMORTAL WORDS THAT JESUS SAID, THERE'S ONE RULE THAT TRUMPS THEM ALL. LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR TRUMPS THEM ALL. LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR TRUMPS THEM ALL..."

SHELBY
You know, you make a lot of sense.

KAYLEE
What are you talking about?

SHELBY
You don't feel even slightly bad for Emma? You guys used to hang out.

KAYLEE
That was before she turned gay.

SHELBY
Well, maybe she was always gay.

TRENT
Exactly. Because that's how God made her, Shelby!

KIDS
(ad libs)
Oh, that's crap. Come on.

The cast of Godspell exits the convenience store with some beers.

GODSPELL CAST MEMBER
Hey Trent. What's going on?

TRENT
It's the guys from Godspell! They'll back me up.

SECOND GODSPELL CAST MEMBER
(to Trent)
What kind of white nonsense are you starting now?

NICK
He's trying to confuse us! My step-dad always says…

TRENT
Step-dad? You mean your parents are divorced?

NICK
Yeah, so?

TRENT
Oh, divorce is a big no-no…
"NOT TO OVERSIMPLIFY, BUT THE SCRIPTURE DOES IMPLY, THAT YOUR MOM WILL HAVE TO DIE, HOW'S TOMORROW IF SHE'S NOT GOT ANY PLANS? THERE'S NO WAY TO SEPARATE,
WHICH RULES YOU CAN VIOLATE, LET'S HOPE YOU DON'T MASTURBATE, 'CAUSE THE SCRIPTURE SAYS WE'LL HAVE TO CUT OFF YOUR HANDS..."

"OR WE COULD USE SOME COMMON SENSE INSTEAD, WHEN YOU'RE LOST IT ALWAYS HELPS RECALLING, THOSE IMMORTAL WORDS THAT JESUS SAID..."

TRENT & GODSPELL CAST
"THERE'S ONE RULE THAT TRUMPS THEM ALL...LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR TRUMPS THEM ALL. LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR TRUMPS THEM ALL..."

SHELBY
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR..."

SIXTH STUDENT
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR TRUMPS THEM ALL..."

More cheers.

SECOND STUDENT
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR..."

TRENT
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR..."

KAYLEE
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR..."

ALL
"TRUMPS THEM ALL!"

TRENT & ENSEMBLE
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR TRUMPS THEM ALL..."

"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR..."

TRENT
"TRUMPS THEM ALL..."

TRENT (CONT'D)
"TIME TO MAKE SOME BETTER CHOICES, DROP THE HATE AND LIFT YOUR VOICES..."

ENSEMBLE
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR IS THE ONE THAT TRUMPS THEM ALL, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR..."

TRENT
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, JESUS TAKE THE WHEEL AND STEER IT, IF YOU FEEL THE HOLY SPIRIT, COME ON, KIDS AND LET ME HEAR IT..."

ENSEMBLE
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR TRUMPS THEM ALL..."

TRENT
"ALL!"

ALL
"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR, LOVE THY NEIGHBOR TRUMPS THEM ALL!"

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- OUTSIDE CAFETERIA -- DAY

Alyssa waits nervously for Emma after school. Emma appears.

ALYSSA
Hi. Thanks for meeting me. I was afraid that you wouldn't --

EMMA
What do you want?

ALYSSA
Wow. Okay. I guess I want to say I'm sorry for what happened.

EMMA
Were you in on it?

ALYSSA
I didn't even know about it until I got there!

EMMA
Nobody told you? What about your BFF's Shelby and Kaylee? They didn't mention anything about the big plan?

ALYSSA
They are not my friends!

EMMA
Okay, so your mother then? She was behind the whole thing.

ALYSSA
Emma. You know me.

EMMA
Do I? What is this? What are we?

ALYSSA
You know what we are.

EMMA
No I don't. Maybe I'm some kind of an experiment? Or you're just trying to piss off your mother?

ALYSSA
Stop. Stop it.

EMMA
Do you know what it was like standing there in that stupid dress alone in the gym? Knowing that people got together and planned the best way to hurt me? To humiliate me? The only way it could have been worse is if a bucket of pig's blood fell on my head.

ALYSSA
It must have been awful.

EMMA
It was. But the worst part -- the worst part was that you didn't come. Even though you knew what happened, you didn't come and you know, hold my hand. Or take me out of there.

ALYSSA
I couldn't.

EMMA
Why?

ALYSSA
You know what my mother's like. She's a complete and total control freak.
(then)
"THE HAIR HAS TO BE PERFECT, THE "A'S" HAVE TO BE STRAIGHT....

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- CLASSROOM -- DAY

Alyssa paces, making a presentation on global warming with a PowerPoint presentation, as her mother beams in the audience.

ALYSSA
"YOU HAVE TO JOIN THE DEBATE CLUB, ON THAT THERE'S NO DEBATE...YOU'LL HAVE BIBLE CAMP EACH SUMMER, TO KEEP YOU PURE AND CLEAN, ENDLESS RULES APPLY, WHEN YOU'RE ALYSSA GREENE..."

EXT. HORSE RIDING RING -- DAY

Alyssa jumps over obstacles on her white stallion.

ALYSSA
"TROPHIES HAVE TO BE FIRST PLACE, RIBBONS HAVE TO BE BLUE...THERE'S ALWAYS SOME COMPETITION, OR HOOPS FOR JUMPING THROUGH..."

Her mother watches, wistful.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- FOOTBALL FIELD -- NIGHT

Alyssa is crowned homecoming queen as everyone watches three convertibles drive different homecoming kings and queens around the field.

ALYSSA
"YOUR MOM'S MADE SACRIFICES, SO WIN HOMECOMING QUEEN, CAUSE IT'S DO OR DIE, WHEN YOU'RE ALYSSA GREENE..."

INT. PARKING LOT -- CONTINUOUS

ALYSSA
"AND YOU WISH THERE WAS A WORLD WHERE YOU WERE SIMPLY FREE TO LIVE, AND WHEN PEOPLE CRITICIZED YOU YOU HAD NO MORE SHITS TO GIVE. AND IN THIS OTHER LIFETIME, WHEN YOU TELL YOURSELF "BE BRAVE," YOU WON'T CAVE, THAT'S THE ONE THING I TRULY CRAVE..."

INT. ALYSSA'S HOUSE -- DAY

Alyssa weighs herself as her mother writes down the lb loss.

ALYSSA
"BUT YOUR FEELINGS HAVE TO BE PHONY, YOUR WEIGHT HAS TO BE TRACKED...

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- FOOTBALL FIELD -- DAY

Alyssa beams, the perfect cheerleader, in formation while football players practice on the field.

ALYSSA
"IF YOU DON'T LIKE SHAKING POM-POMS, YOU'D BETTER LEARN TO ACT. JUST HAVE EVERYTHING PERFECTED BY THE TIME YOU REACH EIGHTEEN, DON'T ASK HOW OR WHY, WHEN YOU'RE ALYSSA GREENE..."

EXT. PARKING LOT -- CONTINUOUS

ALYSSA
"IMPROVE ALL OF YOUR STRONG POINTS AND HIDE THINGS THAT YOU LACK, CAUSE MOM'S CONVINCED IF YOU'RE PERFECT, YOUR FATHER MIGHT COME BACK. YOU'RE NOT YOURSELF, YOU'RE NOT WHAT SHE WANTS, YOU'RE SOMEONE IN BETWEEN...YOUR WHOLE LIFE'S A LIE, WHEN YOU'RE ALYSSA GREENE..."

EMMA
I'm going to go public and tell my story. Will you do it with me?

ALYSSA
I want to, but...

EMMA
Yeah, wanting to is not enough. I believe that you have feelings for me, but I can't do this anymore. It hurts too much.

ALYSSA
Is this... are you breaking up with me?

EMMA
I guess I am, yeah. Bye.

Emma leaves.

ALYSSA
"YOU'RE NOT YOURSELF, YOU'RE NOT WHAT SHE WANTS, YOU'RE SOMEONE IN BETWEEN..."

FADE OUT:

INT. MOTEL LOBBY AREA -- DAY

Sheldon is on a phone call. Barry and Angie wait eagerly.

SHELDON
I get it, Frank. I understand. Thanks for trying.
(hangs up)
That's it. I got nothing.

BARRY
Nothing?

SHELDON
Look, everybody's booked. Give me a month or two and maybe I could get her to sit down with Judy Woodruff.

BARRY
Judy Woodruff? She's on PBS. Nobody watches PBS. You might as well have her sit down with a rock in a box.

ANGIE
So we're sunk?

BARRY
Yep. We blew it again.

Hawkins and Dee Dee enter.

HAWKINS
Hi everyone.

DEE DEE
It's okay. Tom knows what we're up to.

HAWKINS
I'm on board, as long as Emma is comfortable with it.

SHELDON
Well, she's outta luck. I tried, believe me. I kissed so much ass, I can't feel my face! But I got zip. I'm sorry.

Hawkins clears his throat and looks at Dee Dee.

HAWKINS
It's not over yet. Dee Dee?

DEE DEE
I have arranged a TV appearance for her.

BARRY
What?

DEE DEE
On Eddie Sharpe. She's booked for tomorrow at 8. It'll be a live feed from the local news station.

BARRY
Not the house in the Hamptons?

DEE DEE
Yes.

INT. DEE DEE'S HOTEL ROOM -- FLASHBACK -- NIGHT

Dee Dee paces, looks at her cell phone, paces. She lands. Picks up the phone. Dials. A beat. She's very nervous, then --

DEE DEE
Eddie? Hi. It's...Dee Dee.
(a beat)
Yes, that Dee Dee.
(beat)
(MORE)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
Yes, your horrible ex wife who has hated you with the energy of a thousand burning suns for over a decade and has made numerous threats against your life.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY AREA -- RESUME

DEE DEE
What I did was I put her interests ahead of mine, and I expect nothing in return. I have no agenda other than easing someone else's burden.

ANGIE
That was incredibly generous of you.

BARRY
Sheldon? What kind of an audience are we talking about?

SHELDON
Eddie Sharpe? On a weekday? Maybe 16 million.

BARRY
Dee Dee! You've saved the day!

DEE DEE
I know. I love giving back, it's my new thing.

Emma enters.

EMMA
Hey.

BARRY
Emma! Wait til you hear the news. Dee Dee got you on Eddie Sharpe. Tomorrow at 8. That's an audience of 16 million!

EMMA
Wow. That's amazing. Thank you.

DEE DEE
I'm glad I could help. Everything I do from now on comes from a place of love.

EMMA
I'm going to take a stand and I want to thank you all, because without your love and support I never would have found the courage. But... um... the reason I came was to tell you that I'm going to do it *my* way. I'm not going on TV.

There is a pause while everyone processes this.

DEE DEE
You owe me a fucking house!

Dee Dee lunges at Emma, screaming. Hawkins, Sheldon and Angie leap to restrain Dee Dee. Barry shields Emma.

HAWKINS & BARRY & SHELDON
(ad libs)
Whoa! Whoa! Take it easy!

SHELDON
Get her outta here!

Hawkins, Sheldon and Angie wrestle Dee Dee out the door as Barry quickly walks away with Emma towards the cafe. WE TRAVEL with THEM, still seeing Dee Dee kicking in the background.

BARRY
She's a very passionate woman.

EMMA
Yeah. TV's just not my thing. I have a plan, and it's a good plan. I just need time to work on it a bit.

INT. MOTEL CAFE -- CONTINUOUS

As they sit --

EMMA
Don't worry. I'm not giving up.
(beat)
I'm sorry.

BARRY
Hey, honey, we screwed things up every step of the way. If you have a plan, I have faith. You're smarter than all of us put together.
(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)
I just wish there was a Prom waiting for you at the end of all this.

EMMA
I've been giving this a lot of thought. I still believe everybody has good in them, it's just with some people you have to scrape away the crap to see it. So. This is what's going to happen: I'm going to do my thing, and in the end, there will be a kick ass Prom in Edgewater Indiana for everybody, regardless of who they happen to love. I know it.

BARRY
That would be wonderful.

EMMA
And when that happens I want you to be my date.

BARRY
What? What about --

EMMA
We broke up. Just say yes. There's no one in the world I'd rather go with.

BARRY
Don't make me cry. I look so fat...when I cry.
(they hug, then --)
Yes. I'll go with you. Can I wear my silver tux? The one I never wore? I still have it. Of course it needs major renovations. But I could have it FedExed.

EMMA
Well, you better because we are goin' to Prom!

She exits.

BARRY
I can't believe it.

He starts to move through the lobby, alone, stunned.

BARRY (CONT'D)
"I'M ODDLY EXCITED, PERHAPS THAT'S BECAUSE, ALTHOUGH IT SHOULDN'T MATTER, IT SOMEHOW DOES...IT'S STRANGE BUT I FEEL LIKE I'M IN A TIME MACHINE, 'CAUSE GUESS WHAT IT'S LIKE I'M SUDDENLY SEVENTEEN, SO BOOK A WHITE LIMO, UNCORK THE DOM, AFTER TWENTY-NINE YEARS I'M FINALLY GOING TO PROM..."

EXT. LIMO -- NIGHT

Barry's head pops out of the moon roof. He's in his silver tux.

BARRY
"I ONCE THOUGHT A NIGHT LIKE THIS WASN'T IN THE CARDS, NOW I'VE GOT A DATE, A TUX AND THE WHOLE NINE YARDS, A RATIONAL PERSON WOULD JUST STAY CALM, SINCE WHEN AM I RATIONAL? BARRY IS GOING TO PROM THE PROM!

INT. GRANDMA BEA'S HOUSE -- DAY

Barry approaches his YOUNGER SELF. It's very moving.

BARRY
"I WISH I COULD TELL THAT SAD KID I WAS, TO STOP CRYING INTO HIS CHEETOS, THEY SAY, "IT GETS BETTER!" GUESS WHAT? IT DOES! WHO CARES IF YOU'RE A BIG OLD GIRL, JUST GO TO THAT GYM AND TWIRL!"

They TWIRL and we MATCH CUT TO:

INT. PROM -- NIGHT

Barry and his YOUNGER SELF cut a rug through the crowd that once shunned him.

BARRY
"BARRY'S GOING TO THE...TO THE FRIGGIN' PROM! IN SHOWBIZ I NEVER FELT SUCH A THRILL DIVINE, MY DATE IS A HIGH SCHOOL LESBIAN, STILL IT'S FINE. AND THOUGH IT'S BEEN YEARS, I MIGHT CALL MY MOM, AND TELL HER THAT THOUGH IT'S OVERDUE, ALL OF MY WAITING'S OVER, TOO..."

He pulls out his cell phone, calls up MOM.

BARRY (CONT'D)
"AND IF YOU'RE NOT HAPPY, I'M OVER YOU, 'CAUSE BARRY, YES BARRY, LOOK AT ME MOM, BARRY'S GOING TO PROM!"

SMASH TO:

INT. BARRY'S MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Barry plops into frame, phone in his hand, about to dial Mom. But he still can't. Off his pain, we SLOW PAN OUT.

INT. EMMA'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Emma sits on her bed. She has her laptop propped in front of her and she is holding a guitar. She clears her throat and presses a key on her laptop.

EMMA
Hello Interweb. Okay. Well. My name is Emma Nolan; I'm a 17-year-old girl and I'm a lesbian. Maybe you heard about the fake prom in Indiana? Well, that was me. It was truly awful in every way. I was feeling sorry for myself, but then after talking with some friends I decided to take all that awfulness and maybe make something good out of it. So I wrote this song for all the people out there, who just love someone in a way that the rest of the world can't understand. I'm sure we've all got stories to tell. Here's mine.

Emma sings, accompanying herself on guitar.

EMMA (CONT'D)
"SOME HEARTS CAN CONFORM, FITTING THE NORM, FLAUNTING THEIR LOVE FOR ALL TO SEE...I TRIED TO CHANGE THINKING HOW EASY LIFE COULD BE..."

"I JUST KEPT ON FAILING, I GUESS THAT WAS A SIGN, THAT THERE WASN'T MUCH HOPE, FOR THIS UNRULY HEART OF MINE..."

(MORE)

EMMA (CONT'D)
"THEN YOU CAME ALONG, AND RIGHT OR WRONG, FEELINGS BEGAN TO OVERFLOW, WE HAD TO HIDE, THINKING THAT NO ONE ELSE COULD KNOW..."

"AND NOT HAVING YOU NEAR ME WAS WHERE I DREW THE LINE, SO I HAD TO CONCEAL THIS POOR UNRULY HEART OF MINE..."

"AND THOUGH I DON'T KNOW HOW OR WHEN, BUT SOMEHOW I LEARNED TO SEE, NO MATTER WHAT THE WORLD MIGHT SAY, THIS HEART IS THE BEST PART OF ME.. SO FEAR'S ALL IN THE PAST, FADING SO FAST, I WON'T STAY HIDDEN ANYMORE, I'M WHO I AM AND I THINK THAT'S WORTH FIGHTING FOR..."

"AND NOBODY OUT THERE EVER GETS TO DEFINE, THE LIFE I'M MEANT TO LEAD WITH THIS UNRULY HEART OF MINE."

Other VIDEO TESTIMONIALS begin to come up on other STUDENTS who are clearly connecting with Emma's story.

FIRST STUDENT
Hi Emma. Loved your video. Where do I start?

SECOND STUDENT
I think my parents always knew.

THIRD STUDENT
Nothing made sense until him.

FOURTH STUDENT
She's the best thing in my life.

FIFTH STUDENT
The only good thing.

SIXTH STUDENT
But we're always hiding.

FIRST STUDENT
You're not the only one.
(then)
"AND THOUGH I DON'T KNOW HOW OR WHEN..."

SECOND STUDENT
"BUT SOMEHOW I LEARNED TO SEE..."

THIRD STUDENT & FIFTH STUDENT
"NO MATTER WHAT THE WORLD MIGHT SAY..."

ALL
"THIS HEART IS THE BEST PART OF ME..."

ALL (CONT'D)
"SO FEAR'S ALL IN THE PAST, FADING SO FAST, I WON'T STAY HIDDEN ANYMORE, I'M WHO I AM, AND I THINK THAT'S WORTH FIGHTING FOR..."
"AND NOBODY OUT THERE, EVER GETS TO DEFINE, THE LIFE I'M MEANT TO LEAD WITH THIS UNRULY HEART OF MINE, MINE!"

EMMA
"AND NOBODY OUT THERE, EVER GETS TO DEFINE, THE LIFE I'M MEANT TO LEAD WITH THIS UNRULY HEART OF MINE."

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- HAWKINS' OFFICE -- NIGHT

Hawkins is showing Barry, Dee Dee, Angie and Trent the video on his laptop.

BARRY
This video is killing me. This is worse than the one about the guy being reunited with the lion he raised from a cub. It's too much! This is all too much!

HAWKINS
Yep. I wanted to make sure you'd seen it. I've never been more proud.

TRENT
How many people have seen that video?

HAWKINS
6,548,208. It goes up every time I look.

DEE DEE
How are the town folk reacting?

HAWKINS
Well, she got through to them. You can feel the tide turning. Especially with the kids.

BARRY
Great. So, when's the Prom?

HAWKINS
There's no money left.

DEE DEE
What do you mean?

HAWKINS
We already paid for a Prom, remember? This is a town in crisis, you must have noticed that. Still, a miracle might happen. It's early.

BARRY
Okay people. This is it. It's Mickey and Judy time. This is where we roll up our sleeves and build this girl a Prom with our bare hands. I don't care if we decorate that gym with our own blood and hair -- Emma is getting the prom she deserves!

DEE DEE
Wait. What are we talking about here? How much does a Prom cost?

HAWKINS
Well, it won't be a school sanctioned event, so we'll have to pay a rental fee for the gym. Let's see: say 400 kids -- food, a DJ, lighting...I'd say about $30,000.

BARRY
(handing Hawkins his credit card)
Here. You can charge up to 10,000. That's my limit. It's a long story, but I had to declare bankruptcy after my self-produced "Notes on a Scandal."

HAWKINS
10 thousand. You really want to do that?

BARRY
Listen, we failed at the abstract singing and speechifying. This is concrete. This is buying. This is the American way.

ANGIE
(handing Hawkins her card)
What the hell. I think I got about 2 left on my card.

TRENT
(handing Hawkins his card)
Try a thousand.

BARRY
What are we looking at now?

HAWKINS
Um... Well I can add 500. That's about half.

Barry looks at Dee Dee.

DEE DEE
What?

BARRY
Come on. I know you have an American Express Black card. There's no limit on that baby.

DEE DEE
No. No please. I've already lost a 2.3 million dollar house!

BARRY
So this is nothing! Come on, Eleanor!

DEE DEE
(hands Hawkins her card)
Oh why does being good cost so much money?

HAWKINS
Well done, Dee Dee. Okay. We're fully financed!

Everyone cheers, Dee Dee weakly.

BARRY
Let's give this girl a prom!

Barry goes. Dee Dee stops him, leading him into the hallway.

DEE DEE
Barry. Wait. I need to talk to you about something. It's pressing.

BARRY
What?

DEE DEE
Look, I did a lot of thinking. That thing you and I talked about --

BARRY
How 'Starlight Express' is an overlooked gem and deserves a major revival like, *NOW???*

DEE DEE
I mean how if you don't deal with your past, you're not going to be able to move on in love or in *life*--

BARRY
Is that all in 'Starlight Express'?

DEE DEE
(blurting it out)
I called your mother.

BARRY
(flabbergasted)
What? How?

DEE DEE
I found her number on your phone.

BARRY
But. How did you know my password?

DEE DEE
I guessed. 9-4-81. Beyonce's birthday. Got it on the first try.

BARRY
Dee Dee -- *why would you call her?*

DEE DEE
Because I knew you couldn't do it on your own.

BARRY
(a beat, then)
Well -- what did she say?

DEE DEE
I should let her tell you that.

She turns, revealing VERA, Midwestern and soft and sweet.

VERA
Hi, Barry.

Overwhelmed, Barry retreats, hardening.

BARRY
No. This is not fair. You don't get to *do* this. You don't get to just *show* up out of nowhere--

VERA
I came all this way, Barry. It took me half an hour on the Interstate to get here all the way from Ohio --

BARRY
Well, you can turn around and go back.

VERA
(gently)
You called *me*. Didn't you. That was you who called and hung up, wasn't it?
(then, emotional)
I handled this all wrong, honey, and I'm so sorry. Your father and I, when you told us -- I can't even remember what we said -- but whatever it was, clearly it was wrong because it drove you away.

BARRY
You told me I needed to see a *therapist*. Which I *DO* -- but not about *THAT*. Do you have any idea how much that hurt? And how *insane* it sounds now?

VERA
(fighting emotion)
Yes! Now it does! But back then -- and I know it wasn't even that long ago -- when you told us what you were, *WHO* you were, your father and I -- we were scared! We hardly knew what *GAY* meant! All we knew was how hard your life was going to be!
(MORE)

VERA (CONT'D)
And we wanted you to have *children* -- which you can *do* now, and it's *wonderful!* But back then, we both thought that we'd failed you somehow, like maybe it was *our* fault. For YEARS, I have asked myself the haunting question "should I have taken Barry to see Barbra Streisand in The Prince of Tides"?

Barry resists, not letting his guard down.

BARRY
So *NOW* it's okay. Now that gay is *'normal'* to you, it's okay. What *I* needed from you was to be my mother who *didn't* know it was okay yet and *who loved me anyway!* You think *you* were scared? How do you think *I* felt???

VERA
I know! I *know* that I failed you, Barry! That will be on my heart til the day I die. All I can say now is that I was wrong and I'm sorry and every one of my prayers is asking God for you to forgive me...

BARRY
What about Dad? Why didn't he come?

VERA
(pained)
He's not -- he's just not there yet, I'm sorry to say. But I know in my heart that with some forgiveness from you -- someday very soon...he will be.

Barry bursts into tears. She does too as he falls into her arms.

VERA (CONT'D)
Barry, I'm so sorry. I missed you so much -- please forgive me...

BARRY
I missed you, too, Mom. I forgive you...

They look at one another, raw, wounded, but now whole.

VERA
I hear you're putting on a Prom. I wonder if you might need a chaperone sort of person...to guard the punch bowl and smile a whole lot?

BARRY
Yeah, I'd like that...

He takes her by the arm and leads her away.

INT. MRS. GREENE AND ALYSSA'S HOME -- DAY

Alyssa watches Emma's video on her phone.

MRS. GREENE
Aren't you tired of watching that?

ALYSSA
8 million people have seen it. 8 million people.

MRS. GREENE
Well, she got the attention she wanted, didn't she? I just don't understand it.

ALYSSA
What?

MRS. GREENE
This need to share everything about yourself with strangers.

ALYSSA
I think it's brave. You know, the kids are saying that there will be another prom. Somebody's offered to pay for it.

MRS. GREENE
Who?

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- INTERCUT

We see Emma, Barry, Dee Dee, Vera, Trent, Sheldon and Angie gathering in the empty gym, decoration underway. INTERCUT:

EMMA
(excitedly)
This is so generous of you guys.

BARRY
Well, after you broke the Interweb we had to do something.

INT. MRS. GREENE AND ALYSSA'S HOME -- INTERCUT

ALYSSA
Can we talk?

MRS. GREENE
I have a lot on my plate today, honey. I'm supposed to show a house at 3, but I may have to cancel if this rumor is true.

ALYSSA
Things are getting really crazy.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- INTERCUT

EMMA
It was crazy! The number kept going up. And then the Indiana Star called, then the Washington Post. And now they want me to go on TV, which I absolutely do not want to do. But they said it's PBS, which is like smart TV. Do you know Judy Woodruff?

ALL
(ad-libs)
Oh yeah. She's huge.

INT. MRS. GREENE AND ALYSSA'S HOME -- INTERCUT

ALYSSA
Mom. We need to talk about what's really going on here. We can't keep avoiding this. I love you, and the stupid thing is, I think you know what I'm going to say --

MRS. GREENE
Stop it! I'm sorry. I'm sorry, but this is not who you really are. Whatever you're feeling right now is because of those people. They're putting these ideas in your head and they're turning me into someone I don't want to be. I'm sick of all this. Come. We're going to end this now.

ALYSSA
No. I'm not going with you. I don't want to be any part of your shit anymore!

Alyssa storms off. Mrs. Greene exits.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- RESUME

Hawkins enters the gym.

EMMA
Oh my God. Can I just say you guys are the best middle-aged people I have ever met?

BARRY
Hold up for a minute. We need to talk. I think it's important that you know exactly why we came down here.

EMMA
It wasn't for the Hoosier pie?

BARRY
That's delicious, but that's not what I'm talking about. Listen. We got blasted in the Times. They said we were narcissists. In a big, bold font. And it hurt, I guess because they were right.

EMMA
Aren't all actors narcissists?

DEE DEE
Yes, but we were *really* good at it. Anyway, we decided to look for a cause to take on, you know, to give us credibility. Maybe get us a little good press.

TRENT
We thought about building houses with Habitat for Humanity...

BARRY
...but we don't actually know how to build anything.

ANGIE
Then I found you on Twitter. It was just dumb luck.

BARRY
So maybe we're not the best middle-aged people out there, is what I'm saying.

EMMA
Well, sorry to tell you this but you're going to build something. You're going to build a prom. Hundreds of kids like me are coming. I think you got your credibility.

Barry and Emma hug. At that moment --

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Greene bursts in, followed by some PARENTS and STUDENTS.

MRS. GREENE
Stop this. Who gave you people permission to be here?

HAWKINS
I did.

MRS. GREENE
You don't have that right.

HAWKINS
I do, actually. This is a community space --

MRS. GREENE
You should have consulted the PTA.

HAWKINS
This is not a school event. I'm not obliged to get the PTA's approval.

BARRY
Listen to me, this Prom is happening and there's not a damn thing you can do about it.

Mrs. Greene ignores Barry and goes after Hawkins.

MRS. GREENE
I'm going to make this as clear as I possibly can. Your beliefs are not our beliefs. I am proud of who we are and if I have to sue you all to stop this defamation I will. We do not want this.

TRENT
We?

MRS. GREENE
This community.

TRENT
The young people, your children, they are part of your community, correct? Perhaps we should ask them what they want.

All turn to face the crowd of students. Shelby steps forward. She approaches Emma.

SHELBY
Emma, I was a jerk. I'm sorry. You deserve to go to Prom just like any other kid.

Shelby hugs Emma.

EMMA
What? I thought you hated me. I thought you all hated me.

TRENT
Oh, they hated you all right. They hated you with a burning passion stoked by centuries of intolerance and a lack of a drama program.

Kaylee joins Shelby.

KAYLEE
That guy from "Talk to the Hand" really opened our eyes. I'm sorry too, Emma.
(to Trent)
You explain things really well. You should be, like, a teacher.

SHELBY
Oh! You should be our drama teacher!

STUDENTS
(ad libs)
Yeah! Definitely!

The Students all gather around Trent.

TRENT
Really? Fair warning: I do tend to pontificate...

KAYLEE
We could listen to you talk all day!

TRENT
Then yes!
(as they cheer --)
Well, it looks like you don't represent the beliefs of everyone in our community.

MRS. GREENE
(to the other parents)
This is exactly what I warned you about.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL -- GYM -- CONTINUOUS

Alyssa appears at the door.

MRS. GREENE
No. Children are impressionable. If we expose them to inappropriate behavior they'll... they'll...

ALYSSA
Mom.

MRS. GREENE
Alyssa.

ALYSSA
You have to stop talking for a minute and listen, okay? People don't turn gay. They are who they are.

MRS. GREENE
You don't know what you're saying.

ALYSSA
I do. I know how you were raised, but the world's a different place now. It's not great, but it's better because of people who had the courage to be themselves. People like her.
(pointing to Emma)
I don't want to hurt you. I don't want to hurt anyone.
(MORE)

ALYSSA (CONT'D)
I just want to be me. So here goes...
(To Emma)
I love you, Emma Nolan.

EMMA
Holy shit.

The Students react.

TRENT
Class, class. Settle down, class.

MRS. GREENE
Alyssa. You're confused. You're young and you don't know --

BARRY
(to Mrs. Greene)
If you don't let her be who she is, you're going to lose her. You're going to lose your daughter.

VERA
(with emotion)
He's right. Trust me. I know what I'm talking about.

Mrs. Greene turns.

MRS. GREENE
I just don't want you to have a hard life.

ALYSSA
It's already hard.

Mrs. Greene pauses.

ALYSSA (CONT'D)
Mom?

MRS. GREENE
(to Alyssa)
We'll talk tonight, okay?

ALYSSA
Okay.

Mrs. Greene exits. PUSH IN on Barry, moved. A beat, he follows her out. Dee Dee tries to rally the troops.

DEE DEE
Okay everybody...let's make this place pretty. We've got a prom to put on.

As everyone busies themselves and Emma and Alyssa hug through tears at her huge coming out moment, we DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SCHOOL -- DAY

Barry comforts Mrs. Greene, sings to her. Dee Dee comes up at the end and encourages Mrs. Greene to support her daughter.

CUT TO:

INT. PROM -- NIGHT

The big finish. It's really happening.

We find a REAR VIEW OF Emma and Alyssa, holding hands, walking through PASTEL COLORED ROOMS of LIGHT. Pink, then baby blue, yellow...it's the most romantic thing ever.

As music swells they move together through a RAINBOW COLORED TUBE OF LIGHT. It's stirring, moving.

Finally, they come out of the light to reveal they are in the INCLUSIVE PROM. They look up and around. It's a marvel.

ALYSSA
I'm so proud of you. Look what you did.

EMMA
I can't believe it.

Holding hands they drift through the elaborate space. But there are no people yet.

ALYSSA
I think we're early.

EMMA
Yeah, looks that way. Wanna hit up the punch bowl or --

ALYSSA
No.
(beat)
There's only one thing I want to do.

The music begins. The LIGHTS DIM and a SPOTLIGHT finds Alyssa and Emma in the middle of the gym.

ALYSSA (CONT'D)
"I JUST WANNA DANCE WITH YOU, LET THE WHOLE WORLD MELT AWAY AND DANCE WITH YOU..."

EMMA & ALYSSA
"WHO CARES WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY? AND WHEN WERE THROUGH, NO ONE CAN CONVINCE US WE WERE WRONG, ALL IT TAKES IS YOU AND ME..."

EMMA
"AND A SONG..."

ALYSSA
"I JUST WANNA DANCE WITH YOU..."

EMMA
"LET THE WHOLE WORLD MET AWAY AND DANCE..."

ALYSSA
"I JUST WANNA DANCE WITH YOU..."

They take a beat, there is a rustle of activity.

EMMA
I think our first prom goers have arrived.

ANGLE: Dee Dee, Barry, Trent, Angie and Hawkins arrive in their prom best. They are dazzling. They look around, amazed at their creation.

DEE DEE
Oh my god, this is so beautiful.
(to the girls)
And look at you!

BARRY
(eyes welling)
You're the most beautiful.

Everyone is in a wave of emotion, they all start to hug and cry until Emma pulls away with a smile.

EMMA
Okay guys, let's get it together.

ANGIE
Emma's right, pull it together, guys. Kids from across the entire state are coming.

EMMA
So let's do this right!
(then)
"ONE THING YOU'VE TAUGHT ME, IS HOW MUCH PEOPLE ENJOY A SHOW, AND SO YOU'VE GOT ME DEBATING HOW THIS WHOLE NIGHT SHOULD GO...KIDS WILL BE WATCHING, TO SEE WHO EVERY GUEST IS AND SO MY ONLY REQUEST IS..."

"BUILD A PROM FOR EVERYONE, SHOW THEM ALL IT CAN BE DONE, IF MUSIC BLARES, AND NO ONE CARES, WHO YOUR UNRULY HEART LOVES..."

We pan across our Broadway gang and Hawkins, all so emotional at what they've pulled off and the friendships they've created. Angie's phone goes off, she walks away to take the call.

EMMA & ALYSSA
"BUILD IT NOW, MAKE PEOPLE SEE, HOW THE WORLD COULD ONE DAY BE, IT MIGHT COME TRUE IF WE TAKE A CHANCE, BUT TILL THAT DAY COMES, I SAY CUE THE DRUMS, IT'S TIME TO DANCE..."

CAMERA WHIPS to find LGBTQ kids starting to file in, along with Shelby and Kaylee and Sheldon and everyone else. And Barry's Mom, all dressed up. Dee Dee grins, then turns to Hawkins --

DEE DEE
(to Hawkins)
"I JUST WANNA DANCE WITH YOU..."

Barry races up and embraces his mother.

BARRY
"I JUST WANNA DANCE WITH YOU..."

Angie comes back and joins the group.

ANGIE
Oh my God.

BARRY
What? What is it?

ANGIE
I just got the call. Tina Louise has shingles! The producers want me to go on as Roxie Hart!

EMMA
What did you tell them?

ANGIE
I said, "I have a Prom to go to!"

BARRY
Atta girl.

ANGIE
I was kidding. I'm taking the red-eye tomorrow. Let's get this party started!

TRENT
"AND NOW WE'RE DRESSED UP..."

BARRY
"I AM A VISION IN SILVER BLUE..."

EMMA
"IT'S TIME WE 'FESSED UP, THIS YEAR OUR PROM QUEEN WILL BE YOU..."

BARRY
"MAYBE I'LL WEAR A TIARA, WHEN IT'S "GO" TIME..."

BARRY, DEE DEE, TRENT, ANGIE & HAWKINS
"GET READY FOLKS, 'CAUSE IT'S SHOWTIME.. "BUILD A PROM FOR EVERYONE, SHOW THEM ALL IT CAN BE DONE, IF MUSIC BLARES, AND NO ONE CARES, WHO YOUR UNRULY HEART LOVES. BUILD IT NOW, MAKE PEOPLE SEE, HOW THE WORLD COULD ONE DAY BE. IT MIGHT COME TRUE IF WE TAKE A CHANCE BUT TILL THAT DAY COMES, IT'S TIME TO DANCE."

Angie, Trent and Sheldon leave. Suddenly, we see Mrs. Greene enter. She's all dressed up and sparkly and beautiful. She's nervous, she's really made an effort.

Dee Dee gets Alyssa's attention, Alyssa turns and sees her mother. Alyssa is overwhelmed, slowly moves to her mom.

ALYSSA
Is this a dream? Why are you here?

MRS. GREENE
There's a lot to talk about. But I'm here because there's one thing that matters to me more than anything.
(beat, emotional)
You. You're my daughter, and I've loved you from the moment you were born. And that will never change. Ever.

They hug and everyone cheers. As Alyssa leads Mrs. Greene over to talk to Emma, Hawkins spies a little CORSAGE station now manned by Barry's mom.

HAWKINS
What would you prefer? Gardenias or orchids?

DEE DEE
For what?

HAWKINS
Your corsage?

DEE DEE
Oh. Gardenias. Thank you.

Hawkins starts to leave, then turns and gives Dee Dee a romantic kiss. He exits. Dee Dee is completely smitten.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)
Don't let me destroy him.

BARRY
I'll do my best.

DEE DEE
So, is this what not failing feels like?

BARRY
I think so, yeah. Pretty good, huh?

DEE DEE
Yeah.

Find Emma and Alyssa watching everything.

EMMA & ALYSSA
"THIS IS MORE THAN I DARED WISH FOR, IT'S EPIC AND WHAT'S MORE, TONIGHT THERE'S ROOM FOR ANYONE, SO EVERYONE ON THE FLOOR! GET ON THE FLOOR!"

Dance break.

ALL
"IT'S TIME TO BUILD A PROM FOR EVERYONE, SHOW THEM ALL IT CAN BE DONE, IF MUSIC BLARES, AND NO ONE CARES, WHO YOUR UNRULY HEART LOVES..."

"BUILD IT NOW, MAKE PEOPLE SEE HOW THE WORLD COULD ONE DAY BE, IT MIGHT COME TRUE IF WE TAKE A CHANCE, BUT TILL THAT DAY COMES, I SAY CUE THE DRUMS, AND TAKE TO THE FLOOR, THAT'S WHAT THE FLOOR'S FOR, SO TURN UP THE BASS... UNTIL THE WHOLE PLACE, GIVES INTO THE BEAT AND HAS TO REPEAT IT'S TIME TO DANCE..."

EMMA & ALYSSA
"I JUST WANNA DANCE WITH YOU..."

ALL (EXCEPT EMMA & ALYSSA)
"IT'S TIME TO DANCE..."

EMMA & ALYSSA
"I JUST WANNA DANCE WITH YOU..."

ALL
"IT'S TIME TO DANCE, DANCE! IT'S TIME TO DANCE!"

Emma and Alyssa kiss. Everyone applauds for them as we --

END FILM